Week ending Sept. 26 1959

JOHN BULL

Everybody's Weekly

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JOHN BULL
EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY
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The Cover

WELL, they can't have it both ways. If early to bed is the golden rule for growing children, it's only fair that the sting in the tail should be borne with fortitude. Prising open eyelids to see where Daddy kept hiding was the prelude to this piece of gentle Sunday morning bribery—and the resulting silence lasted all of thirty-five seconds. "Mother deserves those forty winks she's stealing," says artist Laurent. "So would anybody else who spent all her waking hours answering questions."

Free Speech

JOHN BULL: EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post and in our feature "We Advise."

Our Friendly Feuds

I AM a member of a small committee which meets once a week. Although our business is, by most standards, trivial, it is amazing how much heat can be generated by differences of opinion.

Often I've seen some small disagreement build up during the evening into a feud between two members.

I've no doubt that if they did not see each other again for some time they would keep this bitter feeling burning in their minds and be enemies for life.

But they have to sit down opposite each other week after week. Life would be impossible if they did not realize that they had to live together and resolve their differences.

Could not the lesson of our little committee be copied to advantage by the world's leaders? Would it not be better if they were committed to regular meetings—say once a year—instead of allowing each to retreat into his own stronghold and grow more bitter about the other's point of view?—T. S. M., Hull, Yorks.

Direct Mail

With all this talk about new ideas in post offices I am surprised at the amount of effort still involved in posting a letter.

I queue at the counter, tender 3d., the young lady carefully tears one stamp from a sheet, we exchange coppers and stamp, I affix the stamp and walk across to the posting box.

Why on earth should not at least one position in each large post office be marked "Direct Posting," so that I can push my letter and 3d. across and then walk out?

One assistant could frank large numbers of letters with a small franking machine and this would not only save the customers' time, but would help to keep the offices clear of traffic.—G. E. WOOLF, Whitwood Mere, Castleford, Yorks.

"In view of the comparatively small proportion of letters posted in this way," says the G.P.O., "we think it would be an easier matter for readers like Mr. Woolf to buy a book of stamps and save themselves having to queue up to buy each threepenny stamp."

Rolled By Hand

Soon it will be time for electoral registration again. And again we can expect to have our forms delivered by council office staff, after office hours at overtime rates of pay.

This is a sheer waste of public money. These forms are fully stamped for posting to and from the householder.—B. CROCKER, Devon.

"Hand delivery is cheaper in the long run," says a registration officer.

"In my area we post the O.H.M.S. printed forms only to blocks of flats where we're fairly sure there's only one family per flat. With houses you don't know how many forms to send so we call to forestall complaints by people left off the roll."

The Captain's Table

On a recent long voyage by British liner I was amazed at the petty social customs laid down by a few so-called inner circle first-class passengers.

One evening I was informed that it was my turn to sit at the captain's table and that I would occupy the third seat on the left from the top.

I appeared to shatter many passengers with the remark that I was quite happy at my own table and wished to remain there.

Later, approaching the South Pacific, when the temperature was

rising, I put on a white dinner jacket and was told by two stewards that I must not wear a white jacket until the captain commenced to wear his white evening kit. My reply to that was "twaddle." Nothing more was said, although I got many black looks—including a grim stare from the captain.—M. FITZGERALD, Alexandra Grove, London, N.12.

The Easy Way

In country districts nowadays children are brought to school in buses. After a while they are stripped nearly naked, go through a lot of contortions, then run round a field a few times to make them physically fit.

What is wrong with walking to do that?

Long ago pupils had to walk more than three miles to school, which kept them as fit as could be, and then were hardly ever absent from school. — J. PURDIE, Denholm, Hawick, Roxburghshire.

No Reduction

Why is it that children's clothes are so dear? Sometimes the parent must pay almost as much for a child's garment as for an adult's.

Is it because the makers and sellers of juvenile clothing know that parents would rather pay than see their children wearing patched-up clothes? Sometimes I wonder if we are not being blackmailed by people dealing in children's things.—MRS. L. P., Newport, Mon.

"The manufacturers are not holding parents up to ransom," says the National Children's Wear Association. "Garment workers are paid basically the same rates for adult or children's clothing—and in some cases more for children's clothing, because the shorter seams and more intricate work make the job more difficult. In addition, it takes longer to produce children's clothing because, with the more intricate work, machines spend much more time stopping and starting."

Up The Poll

Like most of my friends I have never won a raffle, a premium bond prize or an office sweepstake. But during this current election campaign I suddenly realized that there's something else which has never happened to me. I—and all my friends—have never been questioned in any of the multitude of public opinion polls which now play such a prominent part in our political life.

The same goes for these television viewing polls which show how many people watched a certain programme.

I realize that only a small cross-section of the public can be questioned each time. The point is that in this country most people have extremely individualistic opinions on practically everything—and to try to establish generalized trends out of the reactions of a tiny proportion of the people is nonsense.

If these polls are ever proved right I think it's probably because the publication of their results influences people in making up their own minds. And that puts polls in a very different light—as influences *on* public opinion rather than deductions of what current opinion is.—T. L. ROBB, Winchester.

This One On B.R.

Travelling to Arran on holiday I missed the connection because the train was an hour late at Glasgow. I had to spend the weekend at a Glasgow hotel as there were no boats to Arran.

I wrote to British Railways, explaining the circumstances and

enclosing my hotel bill. In reply I had a most courteous letter regretting the inconvenience and delay.

It explained that, though not legally responsible for such contingencies, they were willing to make "unofficial" compensation of my expenses. Thank you, British Railways!—MISS STOLLARD, Moorland Road, Leeds, 6.

"It is quite true that we have no legal obligation to pay expenses in cases like this," says a B.R. spokesman.

"However, we are always willing to consider sympathetically individual cases on their merits."

Roasted Snails

I am not surprised to hear that snail eating is becoming more popular. During the first World War I lived in a pub here in Gloucestershire and saw many snails eaten by men customers during cold winter evenings round the fire.

They would go out and find the snails in the walls round the garden, bring them in and place them on a wide bar which formed part of the fire grate.

They were left there till well roasted and then picked out with a pin and washed down with a pint.—MRS. R. CORDY, Honeyhill Road, Kingswood, Bristol.

Our Son's Calling

Our boy of fifteen was a choir-boy until his voice broke. After that he voluntarily attended classes, was confirmed, takes communion regularly and is now a server.

He is the only member of the family who regularly goes to church—which is an important part of his life. Yet when people ask what career he fancies and we say "the Church," what a response we get!

"A passing phase," "an emotional outburst," "he will grow out of it." Nevertheless if he wants to carry on we shall help him all we can.

As parents we assure the Rev. R. C. ("Free Speech," September 5)

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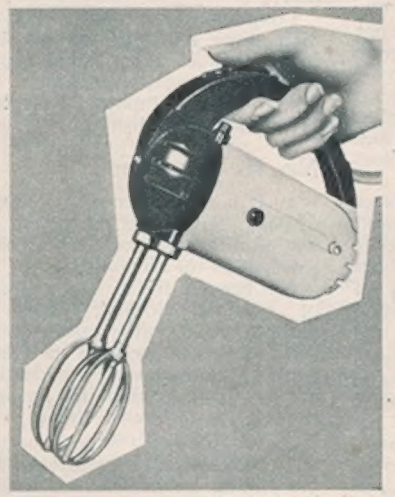

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Free Speech

continued from page 3

that we shall not think our son is being selfish. A good-living, happy son will more than compensate for any monetary sacrifice entailed.—D. S., Yorks.

Prickles Gone Mad ?

A hedgehog arrived in our garden about June and made himself busy every night; he seemed to be after snails.

Then quite suddenly, one warm night in August, he (or she) began running up and down the hedgerow for no apparent reason, chuffing like a little steam engine and giving a little squeak now and again.

We have not seen him since. What was the reason for his behaviour? Was he saying goodbye?—MRS. NORAH ELEY, Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorgan.

"It sounds, from its rather excited behaviour" says a naturalist, "that this hedgehog was probably frightened by something and decided to leave."

Wood No Good ?

Although we live in an age of nuclear energy, with satellites circling the earth, builders must, it seems, continue to use a material which:

Shrinks when it is dry; swells when it is wet; rots if it is alternately wet and dry; warps unless it is carefully seasoned; needs a fresh protective covering every three or four years; will not make a positive bond with materials to which it is frequently affixed.

When is science going to give us something to replace wood?—T. R. TAYLOR, Hook Road, Goole, Yorkshire.

"Science has given us more than one structural material hailed as ushering in a new idyllic, woodless era," says the Timber Development Association, "and yet today more and more people are using wood to build and decorate homes, churches, factories and schools.

"We can improve wood and are doing so all the time by using, for instance, modern seasoning techniques, preservatives and adhesives.

"Not only would it be impossible for science to give us a satisfactory replacement—but all the evidence shows that it would be unnecessary."

Bite Of The Past

I have vivid memories of feasting on a delicious apple called Morgan Sweet when I was a boy in Somerset. Returning there after many years I have not seen this apple on sale.

Gone, too, are varieties I knew as Blenheim Orange and Russet.

Are they unfashionable or poor croppers? They were good eaters.—F. J. VERRIER, London, N.15.

"The Morgan Sweet is now mainly a cider apple," says the National Farmers' Union.

"The Russet has gone out of production; it tended to be unreliable in cropping and wouldn't store too well.

"The Blenheim Orange has suffered under a general tendency among shoppers to know the names of only three varieties—Cox, Worcester and Bramley. However, it is still on sale, though not so widely as these three popular varieties."

A Pick In Time

Travelling in central Europe one notices that most people seem to have very fine teeth.

Is this due to the fact that they use toothpicks after every meal? If so, why don't we use them?—E. FULTON, South Harrow, Middx.

"It's a very great pity that more people in this country don't use toothpicks after every meal," says an expert on dental health.

"By keeping the teeth free of particles they certainly help to prevent decay—as does regular brushing after meals."

MY LIFE WITH OTTO JOHN

by LUCIE JOHN

In July, 1954, Otto John, the Chief of West Germany's Intelligence, vanished mysteriously behind the Iron Curtain, and set off an amazing spy drama that shocked the free world. But the woman who loved him never lost faith. . . . Now, for the first time she tells the truth of this fantastic story

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

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Beginning a thrilling new mystery story by

AGATHA CHRISTIE

A new term at Meadowbank . . . a revolt in Rafat. They were worlds apart: but now death was forging a link

CAT AMONG THE

It was the opening day of the summer term at Meadowbank School. The late afternoon sun shone down on the broad gravel sweep in front of the house. The front door was flung hospitably wide, and just within it stood Miss Vansittart, every hair in place, wearing an impeccably cut coat and skirt.

Some parents who knew no better took her for the great Miss Bulstrode herself, not knowing that it was Miss Bulstrode's custom on such occasions to retire to a kind of holy of holies to which only a selected and privileged few were taken.

To one side of Miss Vansittart was Miss Chadwick, comfortable, knowledgeable, and so much a part of Meadowbank that it would have been impossible to imagine Meadowbank without her. It never had been without her. Miss Bulstrode and Miss Chadwick had started Meadowbank School together. Miss Chadwick wore pince-nez, stooped, was dowdily dressed, and happened to be a brilliant mathematician.

Various welcoming words and phrases, uttered graciously by Miss Vansittart, floated through the house.

"How do you do, Mrs. Arnold? . . . Well, Lydia, did you enjoy your Hellenic cruise? . . . Yes, indeed, Lady Violet, the weather has been terrible so far this spring. Is this your youngest? What is his name? Hector? What a nice aeroplane you have, Hector."

In a small room on the first floor, Ann Shapland, Miss Bulstrode's new secretary, was typing with speed and efficiency. Ann was a nice-looking young woman of thirty-five, with hair that fitted her like a black satin cap. She could be attractive when she wanted to be, but life had taught her that efficiency and competence often paid better results, and avoided painful complications. At the moment she was concentrating on being everything that a secretary to a headmistress of a famous girls' school should be.

She had been, in her time, P.A. to the chief executive of an oil company and numbered two Cabinet ministers and an important civil servant amongst her employers. Until now her work had always lain amongst men, and she wondered how she was going to like being, as she put it to herself, completely submerged in women. Well, it was all experience.

From time to time she looked out of the window and registered interest in the arrivals. She smiled in spite of herself as a very small Austin drove up. A harassed-looking father emerged from it with a daughter who looked far calmer than he did. As he paused uncertainly, Miss Vansittart emerged from the house and took charge.

"Major Hargreaves? And this is Alison? Do come into the house."

"Good old Vansittart, the glorified understudy," Ann said to herself. "She can copy all the Bulstrode's tricks. In fact she's word perfect."

An enormous Cadillac swept into the drive and drew up behind Major Hargreaves's Austin. The chauffeur sprang to open the door and an immense, bearded, dark-skinned man, wearing a flowing aba, stepped out, followed by a slim, dark girl.

"That's probably Princess What's-her-name herself," thought Ann. "Can't imagine her in school uniform, but I suppose the miracle will be apparent tomorrow. . . ."

Both Miss Vansittart and Miss Chadwick appeared on this occasion.

"They'll be taken to the Presence," decided Ann. Miss Vansittart, Miss Chadwick, Miss Bulstrode. . . . All these schoolmistressy characters—she would miss the company of men in the near future. There wasn't a man about the place, except a gardener of about eighty.

But here Ann got a surprise. Looking out of

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

Out of the chamois leather bag fell a glittering stream of precious stones. "Good lord, are they real?" Bob said

PIGEONS

Cat among the pigeons

continued from page 6

the window, she saw there was a man clipping the hedge just beyond the drive—clearly a gardener but a long way from eighty. Young, dark, good-looking. Ann wondered about him. This was no yokel. Oh well, nowadays people did every kind of job.

"He looks," she said to herself, "as though he *might* be amusing." There was only one more letter to do, she was pleased to note, and then she might stroll round the garden. . . .

On the grass sweep of lawn beyond the gravelled drive, Mademoiselle Blanche, the new French mistress, was walking. She looked with appreciative eyes at the powerful young man clipping the hedge.

Mademoiselle Blanche was slender and mouse-like and not very noticeable, but she herself noticed everything. Her eyes went to the procession of cars sweeping up to the front door. She assessed them in terms of money. This Meadowbank was certainly *formidable*.

Miss Rich, who taught English and geography, advanced towards the house at a rapid pace, stumbling a little now and then because, as usual, she forgot to look where she was going. Her hair, also as usual, had escaped from its bun. She had an eager, ugly face.

She was saying to herself: "To be back again. To be *here* . . . it seems years." She fell over a rake, and the young gardener put out an arm and said: "Steady, Miss."

Eileen Rich said "Thank you," without looking at him.

MISS BULSTRODE'S sitting-room had windows looking out in two directions, one over the drive and lawn beyond, and another towards a bank of rhododendrons behind the house. It was quite an impressive room. Miss Bulstrode was tall, and rather noble-looking, with well-dressed grey hair, grey eyes with plenty of humour in them, and a firm mouth.

The success of her school was entirely due to the personality of its headmistress. It was a very expensive school, but her pupils were a varied lot. Miss Bulstrode did not accept morons and she preferred to take girls whose parents she liked and girls in whom she herself saw a prospect of development.

At the moment she was receiving the dark-skinned occupants of the Cadillac. The big, bearded man in Oriental dress took Miss Bulstrode's hand, bowed over it, and said in very good English, "I have the honour to bring to you the Princess Shaista."

Miss Bulstrode knew all about her new pupil, who had just come from a school in Switzerland, but was a little hazy as to who it was escorting her. Not the emir himself, she decided; probably the minister, or a chargé d'affaires. As usual when in doubt, she used that useful title *Excellence*.

Shaista was smiling politely. She was fashionably dressed and heavily perfumed. Her age, Miss Bulstrode knew, was fifteen, but like many eastern girls, she looked older.

More compliments were uttered on both sides and then the room was empty again, though still filled with such heavy perfume that Miss Bulstrode opened both windows to their full extent to let some of it out.

The next comers were Mrs. Upjohn and her daughter Julia. Mrs. Upjohn was an agreeable young woman in the late thirties, with sandy hair, freckles and an unbecoming hat. Julia was a plain, freckled child, with an intelligent forehead, and an air of good humour.

The preliminaries were quickly gone through and Julia was despatched to Miss Johnson, the school matron, saying cheerfully as she went: "So long, Mum. *Do* be careful lighting that gas heater now I'm not there to do it."

Miss Bulstrode turned smilingly to Mrs. Upjohn. "Is there anything special you want to tell me about Julia?" she asked.

Mrs. Upjohn replied cheerfully: "Oh no, I don't think so. Julia's a very ordinary sort of child. Quite healthy and all that. I think she's got reasonably good brains, too, but I daresay all mothers think that, don't they?"

"Mothers," said Miss Bulstrode grimly, "vary."

"It's wonderful for her to be able to come here," said Mrs. Upjohn. "I'm awfully pleased about it. And so is Julia." She moved to the window. "How lovely your garden is. And so tidy. You must have lots of real gardeners."

"We had three," said Miss Bulstrode, "but just now we're short-handed."

"Of course, the trouble nowadays," said Mrs. Upjohn, "is that what one calls a gardener usually isn't a gardener, just a milkman who wants to do something in his spare time. I sometimes think—Why!" exclaimed Mrs. Upjohn, still gazing out of the window, "how extraordinary!"

Miss Bulstrode paid less attention to this sudden exclamation than she should have done. For at that moment she herself had glanced casually out of the other window which gave on to the rhododendron shrubbery, and had perceived a highly unwelcome sight, none other than Lady Veronica Carlton-Sandways, weaving her way along the path, clearly in a state of intoxication.

LADY VERONICA was not an unknown hazard. She was a charming woman, deeply attached to her twin daughters, and very delightful when she was, as they put it, *herself*—but unfortunately, at unpredictable intervals, she was not herself. There were times when Lady Veronica tanked herself up and made a beeline for her daughters to assure them of her maternal love. The twins had arrived by train early today.

Mrs. Upjohn was still talking, but Miss Bulstrode was not listening. She was reviewing various courses of action, for she recognized that Lady Veronica was fast approaching the truculent stage. Then, suddenly, an answer to prayer, Miss Chadwick appeared at a brisk trot, slightly out of breath. *Faithful Chaddy*, thought Miss Bulstrode. *Always to be relied upon.*

"Disgraceful," said Lady Veronica loudly. "Tried to keep me away . . didn't want me to come down here . . . I fooled them, though. Went to have my rest . . . got out of car . . . gave them the slip . . . had a row with police on the way . . . said I was unfit to drive car . . . nonshense . . . going to tell Miss Bulstrode I'm taking the girls home . . . want 'em home, mother love. Wonderful thing, mother love. . . ."

"THAT'S splendid, Lady Veronica," said Miss Chadwick. "We're so pleased you've come. I want you to see the new sports pavilion. You'll love it."

Adroitly she turned Lady Veronica's unsteady footsteps in the opposite direction. Their voices trailed away. Miss Bulstrode heaved a sigh of relief and turned with a sense of guilt to Mrs. Upjohn, who had been talking happily.

". . . though, of course," Mrs. Upjohn was saying, "never real cloak-and-dagger stuff. I shouldn't have been brave enough. It was mostly very dull. Office work. And plotting things on a map. But it was exciting sometimes . . . all the secret agents following each other round and round Geneva, all knowing each other by sight, and often ending up in the same bar."

She stopped abruptly with an apologetic and friendly smile.

"I'm sorry I've been talking so much. Taking up your time."

She held out a hand, said goodbye and departed.

Miss Bulstrode stood frowning for a moment. Without knowing exactly why, she felt uneasy. Some instinct warned her that she had missed something that might be important.

She brushed the feeling aside. This was the opening day of summer term, and she had many more parents to see.

About two months earlier than the first day of the summer term at Meadowbank, certain events had taken place in a small Middle Eastern country which were to have unexpected repercussions in that celebrated girls' school.

In the palace at Rafat, two young men sat smoking and considering the immediate future. One young man was dark, with a smooth olive face and large melancholy eyes. He was Prince Ali Yusuf, Hereditary Sheikh of Rafat, which, though small, was one of the richest states in the Middle East. The other young man was sandy-haired and freckled, and more or less penniless except for the handsome salary he drew as private pilot to Prince Ali Yusuf.

In spite of this difference in status, they were on terms of equality. They had been at the same public school.

"They shot at us, Bob," said Prince Ali almost incredulously. "They meant to bring us down."

"The bastards meant it all right," said Bob Rawlinson grimly.

Ali considered. "It would hardly be worth while trying it again?"

"We mightn't be so lucky next time, Ali. We've left things too late. You should have got out two weeks ago."

"One doesn't like to run away."

"I see your point. But those who run away live to fight another day," Rawlinson frowned. "Couldn't the embassy do something?"

Ali Yusuf flushed angrily.

"Take refuge in your embassy? That, never. The extremists would probably storm the place—they wouldn't respect diplomatic immunity. Besides, if I did that, it really would be the end. Already the chief accusation against me is of being pro-Western." He sighed. "It is so difficult to understand." He sounded wistful, younger than his twenty-five years. "My grandfather was a cruel man, a real tyrant. He had hundreds of slaves and treated them ruthlessly. And yet—*he* is a legend still. Admired. Respected. And I? What have I done? Built hospitals and schools . . . all the things people are said to want. Don't they want them? Would they prefer a reign of terror?"

BOB RAWLINSON said, "I expect so. Seems a bit unfair. But never mind all that. The thing is how we're going to get you out of here. Is there anybody in the army you can really trust?"

Prince Ali Yusuf shook his head.

"There are spies everywhere in this palace. . . . They hear everything . . . they know everything."

"Even down at the hangars . . ." Bob broke off. "Old Achmed's all right. He's got a kind of sixth sense. Found one of the mechanics trying to tamper with the plane . . . one of the men we'd have sworn were absolutely trustworthy. Look here, Ali, if we're going to have a shot at getting you away, it will have to be soon."

"I know. If I stay I shall be killed."

"We'll stand a good chance of being killed anyway," Bob warned him. "We'll have to fly out north, you know. They can't intercept us that way. But it means going over the mountains—and at this time of year it's damned risky."

"I do not like the idea of running away," said Ali simply. "But I do not in the least want to be cut to pieces by a mob." He was silent for a moment or two. "Very well then," he said at last with a sigh. When?"

Bob shrugged his shoulders.

"Sooner the better. We've got to get you to the airfield in some natural way—how about saying you're going to inspect the new road construction out at Al Jasar? Sudden whim. Go this afternoon. Then, as your car passes the airfield, stop there—I'll have the bus all ready and tuned up. The idea will be to go up to inspect the road construction from the air, see? We take off and *go*. We can't take any baggage, of course. It's got to be all quite impromptu."

"There is nothing I wish to take with me. Except one thing. . . ."

Ali's hand went inside his shirt and fumbled. Then he held out a little chamois leather bag, untied the neck, and poured the contents on the table.

Bob held his breath, then expelled

continued on page 35

AUTUMN

This is the season when
sun-ripened fruit
Bears down the bough.
Bright as a shimmering Christmas
bauble hangs
The apple now.
Pears blown to plump perfection
drop and fill
The plashy scene,
And on old walls trails with
voluptuous ease
The nectarine.
Most loved of boys, the chestnut,
spikey fellow,
Splits in the gale.
And shivering hazels patter
in the lane
Like summer hail.

JEAN KENWARD

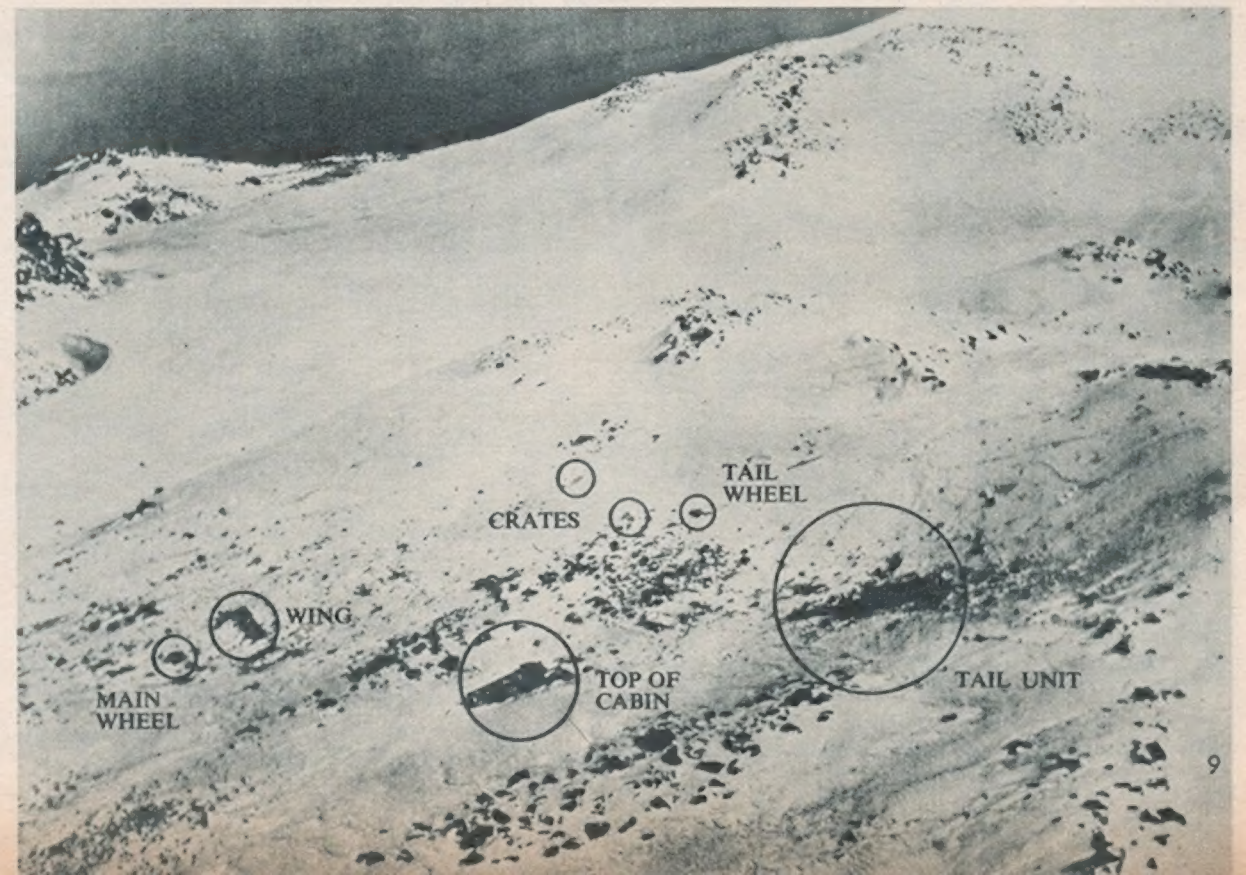
Somewhere on Russia's snow-capped border a plane had vanished—with Britain's latest missiles aboard. To a handful of men flashed the order . . .

In Cyprus the R.A.F.'s mountain-rescue team waited on two-hour stand-by. Back row, left to right: Robertson, the leader, Bishop, Murphy, and Ellis, the doctor. Front: Costall and Emmerson

"FIND THIS SECRET CARGO —AND DESTROY IT"

by **ALEXANDER BARRIE**

After a six-day search the wreck was spotted near the summit of "unclimbable" Mount Suphan. Now it was up to the R.A.F.'s mountaineers



SOON after seven on the morning of Thursday, April 23, a British-owned Tudor Super Trader taxied to the runway at Ankara airfield, Turkey. The aircraft, which had a crew of twelve, was piloted by Captain John Bridger.

In all respects but one this was, for Bridger, an ordinary freighting trip. The vital exception was in the nature of his cargo: it was listed as "top secret" and its destination was the rocket range at Woomera. The key to many of Britain's most closely guarded defence secrets lay snugly in the freight bays of the aircraft. Among the equipment were two new missiles.

Ahead lay the trickiest leg of the ten thousand miles between Britain and Australia. The plane must fly along an eastern corridor over Turkey and Persia, passing within ninety miles of the Russian border. It was a famous trouble spot. Shortly before, a U.S. plane had been blown off track and forced down into Russian territory. All pilots had been warned to take care.

The Super Trader took off from Ankara at 7.19 a.m. Two hours seven minutes later, the Turkish air traffic control centre at Elazig heard Captain Bridger's voice sending a routine signal over the radio: "I'm over Mus and on course in seven-eighths cloud. Height thirteen thousand five hundred feet, air-speed one hundred and ninety knots. I'm about seven minutes late. Over."

Elazig acknowledged briefly. The

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aircraft was now far to the east and would soon be in Persia.

No further signals followed. The radio operator at Elazig, puzzled by the plane's failure to report, asked the pilot of another aircraft flying in the area to listen for it on all frequencies. No other action followed until the evening, when an alarm was sent to the Air Ministry in London from Bahrein, where the Tudor had been due in the afternoon.

By international agreement, the British Air Attaché in Ankara, Group Captain Gilbert Howie, should have been told at once that an aircraft was missing. He heard nothing until the following evening when a signal arrived from the Air Ministry—thirty-one hours after the plane had disappeared.

Howie was worried about the fate of possible survivors. He learned that two Turkish planes had already been searching for the Tudor, and asked if the R.A.F. could join the search from a base inside Turkey. Then he signalled the R.A.F. headquarters at Episkopi, in Cyprus.

Immediately a message was flashed from Episkopi to Wing Commander Peter Parrott, the station commander at Nicosia airfield, where a specially equipped search-and-rescue Hastings was kept on permanent stand-by. At 5.30 a.m. on the twenty-fifth, the Hastings took off. The pilot headed for the town of Van, in Turkey, and a huge lake beside it. The missing Tudor should have crossed both. Within a few hours a second Hastings and a Shackleton had joined the hunt.

Meanwhile, Parrott telephoned Flight Sergeant Harry Appleby, n.c.o. in charge of the station's mountain-rescue team.

"Are the boys at home?" asked Parrott.

"Eight are out training on the hills, sir. They've got most of the gear."

"Better recall them," said Parrott. "A Tudor Super Trader is missing."

"Right, sir. I'll put the team on stand-by."

"You'll need an officer to take charge. Who could do it?"

"We could get Flight Lieutenant Robertson at Episkopi," suggested Appleby. "He's a climber."

"Good. I'll try to get him," said Parrott. He rang off: three other telephone callers wanted him.

In the operations room, Parrott began to plan a systematic air search covering two thousand square miles of eastern Turkey. His air crews were flying the "creeping line" approach—the pattern a mower follows on the lawn. But radio messages from the search planes told of difficulties.

Winds were strong and changeable, there was a lot of cloud, and blizzards were raging on the mountain tops. The air-crews reported seeing more mountains than their maps showed. The danger of flying into cloud and then into an uncharted peak was acute.

Was it in Russia?

Parrott was relieved when a signal from Ankara gave him permission to set up a temporary base in Turkey—at Diyarbakir, close to the search zone. He radioed Flight Lieutenant Simpson, pilot of one of the Hastings, to land there and take charge of the post.

By this time Parrott knew that finding the lost plane was going to be difficult. There were a dozen peaks it could have hit, five thousand square miles of lake it could have plunged into. Snow may already have buried the wreckage.

Another possibility was being whispered: perhaps the Russians, having found out that there was secret equipment on board, had forced it down in their territory.

On Tuesday, April 28, bad weather grounded the search aircraft early. Then a signal came from Middle East headquarters ordering the search to be wound down the next day, and called off by evening. The R.A.F. detachment in Diyarbakir became very depressed. Flying Officer George Noble, captain of one of the searching planes, went into conference with his crew—they were due to make the last search of the operation next morning.

Noble felt that they should concentrate on Mount Suphan, a 14,000-foot peak which dominated the area, although it had been combed already. The crew agreed. When Noble asked permission to search the mountain-top he was told, "Go where you like." The last flight was a formality.

On his first run over Suphan Noble saw something dark and square in the snow. He called the crew on intercom: "I can see a hut below. But there's no sense in a hut here, is there?"

He orbited for a second run. "It's it . . . it's it," shouted one of the crew. "I can see a tail-plane."

It was 6.15 on the morning of April 29. The Tudor had been found five days and twenty-three hours after it had crashed, and in the last few minutes of the search.

It had been seriously off-course to the north, and had hit the mountain only twelve feet below the summit—the difference between safety and destruction. Captain Bridger, flying on instruments, could never have seen the mountain he hit. Wreckage was hurled across half a square mile of mountain-top. The secret cargo lay nakedly on the ground.

During the search the mountain rescue team had been on two-hour stand-by at Nicosia.

Flight Lieutenant Thomas Robertson had arrived to take charge of the team, and Flight Sergeant Appleby had picked seventeen men for the job—all that could be accommodated in the Hastings which was to take them to Turkey.

Then the telephone rang in Appleby's office. Robertson took the call. It was Wing Commander Parrott from the operations room. "You're in business," he said. "Get moving."

Within an hour the team, with its Land-Rover, two trailers and equipment, had taken off for the base at Diyarbakir. From there a drive of 160 miles had to be made.

The climbers learned that Suphan was considered unclimbable except in September, that there would be serious avalanche risks and that bears and wolves roamed on the slopes. Robertson examined air photos of the crash. They seemed to show footsteps in the snow near the wreckage; hope of survivors revived.

At four in the afternoon, they stopped at the forty-hut village of Nurskincik, seven thousand feet up the slopes of Mount Suphan, where Robertson set up his base camp in the village schoolroom. There, he explained his plans for next day. Sergeant Jack Emmerson, the team's most experienced climber, would start up the mountain with two corporals and an airman. They would take tents and provisions, helped by nine baggage bearers.

Next morning, when Emmerson's party set out, a moderate wind had blown up. Snow and sleet could be seen falling higher up. By noon they had reached 11,000 feet and the snowfall had become a blizzard. They roped up. It became very cold; goggles and eyebrows iced over persistently.

They fought on, half-blind and heavy-limbed, until 2 p.m., when they had reached 12,200 feet, and Emmerson decided to set up camp on a sheltered ridge. The support party left to go back down the mountain and all four climbers crept into their sleeping bags. They were very tired.

At 4.30 they rose, breakfasted on sausage and pears, and packed up to leave. At six they set out. It had stopped snowing, but clouds were building up. They hoped to reach the summit that day.

Airlift of supplies

Soon after the team had left Cyprus, Wing Commander Parrott, who was in charge of the whole operation, flew to Diyarbakir to get first-hand information. He found plenty to worry about.

Parrott foresaw two grave difficulties. First, the Turks were short of supplies and couldn't sustain the team from their stores. Second, a communications breakdown threatened.

Back in Nicosia he obtained parachute containers from the army and began organizing an airlift of essential supplies. To keep communications going, he planned to use his aircraft as a flying telephone exchange. Planes would orbit overhead, relaying radio messages from the team.

But only one aircraft—a Hastings—was ready for a lengthy stay at Diyarbakir. Parrott was exasperated to hear that vital parts of its radio were missing. He asked the Air Ministry in London for replacements.

Within hours they were put on a Viscount bound for Diyarbakir. The plane had just left London Airport when the Air Ministry signalled that they had sent the wrong parts; the right ones would follow.

By this time Parrott had decided to fly back to Diyarbakir and direct operations from there. One of his biggest worries was the necessity to destroy the secret equipment which the Tudor had been carrying to Woomera. He still did not know exactly what was in the cargo, but before leaving Nicosia he asked Squadron Leader John Ellery, a rockets expert, to stand by to fly to Mount Suphan at short notice.

SOS for pistols

Soon after his return to Diyarbakir, Parrott heard that the rescue team had made a radio request for pistols, but he decided that he dared not comply. Meanwhile, the radio parts had arrived.

At noon the same day a Turkish helicopter landed near the climbers' base at Nurskincik, and a senior Turkish officer got out. He had heard of the goings-on at Suphan and had come for a look. Robertson told him that the first party hoped to reach the scene of the crash next day. Before leaving, the Turkish officer promised to send the helicopter back next morning. It arrived at 9.30, and the two pilots offered lifts "as high as the machine will go."

Robertson decided to take a second party himself and chose Flying Officer Ronald Ellis, the team's doctor, and two airmen—George Murphy and Derek Bishop—to go with him. They were still unarmed, although Robertson had again asked for pistols, and Parrott had promised to supply them.

Within an hour the party had been dumped at 11,000 feet—the highest a helicopter had ever flown operationally. They began climbing, roped together, at six hundred feet an

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The rescue team returns to Nicosia . . . and Flight Sergeant Appleby is greeted by his wife Anne. Appleby disobeyed orders to make a bid to climb Suphan; another party reported: "We've climbed the wrong peak"

Others had tried to tame The Cat, and failed. Now it was Ricardo's turn — and he was one man against a hostile crowd

Terror in the town

by HUGH B. CAVE

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

Ricardo moved swiftly forward and smashed his fist into the bandit's jaw. The Cat watched, silent, as his fate was decided

IT was in February that the new teacher, Ricardo Rosas, came to Pescadero. Our former teacher had resigned during the holidays, and Rosas was sent to take his place. The ugly reputation of Pescadero had spread from one end of San Marlo to the other, and we could get no one else.

He came by bus, and I, Felipe Artega, having agreed to provide accommodation for him, went down to the plaza to meet him. As soon as I saw him, I knew he would not last. What we required in this time of tension was a man with the strength of a bull and the courage of a matador. Ricardo Rosas was straight from college—attractive, but much too young. El Gato—The Cat—and his gang of ruffians would crucify this man.

But he was here; he had to be given his chance. I introduced myself, shook his hand, took his bag. As we walked up the hill, I pointed out the school.

"You are having a little trouble here, I understand," he said.

"Trouble?"

"With some of the pupils. Or so I was told when I accepted the position."

I hesitated. We had decided to tell him no more than he might already know. What could be gained by telling him? The truth would only make him afraid.

"You may find a few of the pupils troublesome, perhaps." I shrugged.

A slouching figure stepped from a doorway to block the narrow pavement, and the skin tightened on the backs of my hands as I halted. So the battle was to be joined at once.

"Why, good morning, Papa Artega." The youths gave me a languid smile, his thumbs curling under his carved leather belt. "Who is this with you?"

"Your new teacher." With dry lips I made the introductions, not feeling it necessary to add that this slender fifteen-year-old youth, Lico Morales, was the infamous El Gato himself.

El Gato allowed his insolent gaze to linger on the teacher's face a moment, then smiled again and bowed. "Allow me to carry the great man's suitcase," he said.

Up the hill we went, El Gato in his sleek black trousers and red silk shirt lazily leading the way. I saw his cronies now, watching from a dozen doorways. A chill sped over me.

WE reached the corner and stepped off the kerb. Water flowed down the gutter there from a pipe in Diego Chamorro's wall, just ahead. El Gato stumbled, the bag leaping from his hand to strike the side of the gutter with a great splash. The lid flew open. Clothes and books spilled out.

With a cry of pretended dismay, the youth hastened to gather them up. Only he did not gather them up. His clumsy hands scattered them more, and his shuffling feet trampled them into the milky water. Only when the last garment was defiled, the last book ruined, did he manage to scoop them back into the suitcase.

He rose with a look of contrition on his handsome face. "How careless of me, *profesor*. How clumsy!"

From the doorways the others watched, and it seemed to me that the whole street held its breath. The teacher reached for the suitcase. "An accident, Lico. Think nothing of it."

"But your clothes! Your precious books!" On the balls of his bare feet, hands limp at his sides, shoulders and eyelids drooping, El Gato waited.

"Of no consequence," Ricardo Rosas said. "My valued possessions will arrive later, in a trunk."

We walked on, leaving the boy open-mouthed behind us.

When I had introduced the teacher to my wife and children, I led him to the room that was to be his: a nice room, large and airy, with freshly whitewashed walls and a good bed. A door led to the patio, where we had a mango tree and many flowers, tended with loving care by my daughter, Teresa.

The teacher opened the patio door and placed his muddy suitcase on the tiles outside. He turned to face me.

"That was El Gato?"

I nodded helplessly.

"I suppose you held a meeting and decided to let me find things out for myself," he said. "That's quite all right. I don't blame you. But I already know a good deal, you see, I had a talk with your former teacher in the capital."

"You talked with Antonio Lopez?"

He sat on the bed and frowned at me. "Lopez was very angry and may have coloured his story for my benefit. Let me see if I have things straight, Señor Artega. You are being terrorized here in Pescadero by a gang of toughs ranging in age from twelve to fifteen and led by this Lico Morales who calls himself The Cat."

I nodded sadly.

"These boys are all to be pupils of mine?"

"They—they will make up more than half your class."

"And I can't expect any help from

GILBERT HARDING SAYS...

My vote goes to courage

PROBABLY you have by now completely forgotten about that cosy chat Mr. Macmillan had on television with Mr. Eisenhower when the President was over here. I do not blame you. It was a most splendid example, the best I have come across to date, of what I call "No-speak."

Our politicians are becoming quite adept at "No-speak"; you will have plenty of opportunities to see for yourself what I mean during this election.

As an old hand, myself, on television I can see that training is beginning to tell. Appearing deceptively relaxed in a tabby-cat-on-the-rug, "pass the port, please, Harold" setting, the Prime Minister and the President look us straight in the eye. We have a privileged sense of intimacy; we are the third man on the sofa. We are expected to be so overcome by such proximity that the fact they are indeed not saying anything new will completely escape us.

President's aside

The object of the exercise is to exude personality, not genuinely to talk politics.

However, there was just one thing said that has remained in my mind; it was almost an aside of the President's.

"I think," he said, "people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of their way and let them have it."

At that I gave a loud Harding hurrah. Of course governments can never really get out of the way but at least they need not always be in the way.

The alternative to peace is unthinkable. We should, and I believe we can, take it for granted that the Russians (who had a worse time of it during the war than we did) want peace, too.

So it is no use the politicians pretending that you and I, and Russian Ivan, are bloodthirsty brutes, longing to fly at one another's throats, and that they can only keep us apart with the greatest difficulty.

How right the President was! I am heartily sick of politicians puffing out their chests and saying, "Just look at me! Aren't I splendid—no war yet! Be eternally grateful, you electors," and pretending that they are working against tremendous odds to keep their peace-hungry people at peace.

Peace? There had better be. Let them get out of the way, learn to get on with one another, learn to compromise with one another, and we shall have peace, all right.

Governments, for my liking, are far too busy shadow-boxing with one another, pretending to be enormously bold, brave and tough in the international field. Well, then, how about a bit of genuine courage at home?

There are so many things that need firm grasping, but they are hot potatoes. In the United States ordinary people, I am sure, want to see an end of corruption in home politics. We want—or, at least, I want—to see some sense made of our Sunday laws, our betting laws, our licensing laws.

I would like to see a bit of clarity in the thinking of political parties; it seems their aim, these days, to blur everything, rather than to be brave.

While the Conservatives are talking about the sanctity of free enterprise, the government decides to intervene in the placing of a strip mill, and considers coughing up £25 million towards building a new Cunarder.

The Labour Party is all for helping people in the under-developed countries; and you would expect them to find it difficult to call for compulsory limitation of imports into this country from Hongkong, India and Pakistan. But not so Mr. Harold Wilson.

I am blowed if I know, precisely, what the parties really intended to do upon half a dozen vital issues. They will not speak out or tackle a single matter that has a thorn or two in it.

The government and its minions are never to hand when they are needed but always in the way when they are not.

Down . . . or up?

Not long ago, on one of his "meet the people" tours, Mr. Macmillan looked in on a cut-price shop. "Keep it up," he said encouragingly, "that's the way to keep prices down."

Even he did not seem to know that there is a government department whose job it is to keep prices up.

The traffic commissioners regulate bus and coach fares and, while Mr. Macmillan was passing on his bit of encouragement to the price-cutters, they were making a coach firm at Bilston, Staffordshire, put up its fares (in line with others on twelve routes) even though the firm had not the slightest wish to do so.

So it goes on, too much government when we could dispense with it, not enough when we badly need it.

My vote goes to any courageous government which will put commonsense into the ordinary way of living. THE END

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your decent citizens or undermanned little police force, eh?"

"Or from the government," I sighed. "We are too small a town, too remote."

He offered me a cigarette. "So it's to be Rosas versus El Gato and his gang, with no holds barred. Tell me about the boy. Lopez said his father was a notorious bandit."

I shook my head. "Is, señor, not was. *Is* a notorious bandit! This is a wild and desolate corner of San Marlo. For years, Martin Morales and his outlaw followers have all but ruled it. But he is not the boy's father. Only an adored uncle."

The teacher gazed thoughtfully at his cigarette. "A case of hero worship, eh? And, of course, the uncle is the real reason why all of you have been letting the boy get away with it."

I bowed my head. "Now you know everything."

We liked this young man. My wife and I, our two sons, our daughter, Teresa, we all liked him. He was polite, considerate, and asked a thousand questions about Pescadero. He praised the simple food my Maria served.

His trunk came by bus, and was carried to the house without incident. He went to look at the school, sorted out the books and even did some painting. If he worried about what would happen when he faced El Gato he was too busy to show it.

In Pescadero, school begins at eight o'clock. Ricardo arrived on the first day at half past seven. He walked in.

Did I say that he had done some painting there in the classroom? Not liking the dark walls and dingy ceiling, he had spent hours transforming them at his own expense.

Now he stood in that room and saw every foot of wall and ceiling space blotched with enormous red and black inscriptions. GOOD MORNING, DEAR TEACHER! WELCOME, BELOVED PROFESSOR! MAY YOU'R STAY IN PESCADERO BE A SOJOURN IN PARADISE!

A few minutes before eight, the pupils arrived.

JUAN and Jose told me what happened. They found the new teacher seated at his desk, reading a book. His gaze travelled tranquilly about the room as the pupils noisily seated themselves. He returned his attention to the book until the room was quiet as a church and every eye was on him.

Then he stood up. "Never before in the history of Pescadero, I am sure," he said with a smile, "has a class so enthusiastically welcomed a new teacher. I am deeply moved and I thank you." A small smile played about his mouth. "That is, I thank all of you except a certain few who, I understand, do not share these sentiments and therefore could have had no part in painting them."

Utter silence greeted this little speech. All eyes were on El Gato, who gazed at Rosas with a puzzled frown.

The teacher glanced at The Cat: "There is something you wish to say, Lico?"

El Gato half rose, shook his head in bewilderment, and fell back again.

"Then we'll begin by giving out the books," Ricardo Rosas said; and for that day he had no trouble. . . .

In class the following morning the gang made its next move. When the teacher instructed his pupils to take up their history books, El Gato sneered: "I do not like this book. It is stupid."

The teacher nodded. "An understandable reaction," he said calmly. "History is often made by stupid men. What part of the book offends you?"

"This nonsense about the saintliness of Jorge Moncada," El Gato jeered. "A hero, the book calls him. The saviour of our country. He was a chicken-hearted coward!"

To understand this outburst and the gasp that greeted it, you would have to know something of our history. Perhaps I can shorten it by saying simply that Jorge Moncada was the Gandhi of San Marlo in our struggle for independence.

"You would call Moncada a coward?" the teacher said. "Why?"

El Gato and his cronies must have planned the incident carefully. "He was afraid to fight!" The Cat hissed.

"Afraid even to raise his voice!" shouted Pedro Ferrara.

"A mouse!" bellowed Vincente Barrios.

"A weakling!" howled Bernal Garcia.

In a moment the class was in an uproar. The teacher leaned on his desk and waited for the tumult to subside. Then, smiling, he walked down the aisle to El Gato's desk. "I think we have a slight misunderstanding about this Jorge Moncada," he said. "Allow me to demonstrate. Stand up, Lico."

The youth obeyed, his graceful hands loosely curled at his sides.

"Do you recall the name of the man who was dictator of San Marlo at the time of Moncada's passive resistance?" the teacher asked.

"General Huerta! A brave man!"

"Excellent. Now then, you are General Huerta. I am Jorge Moncada. We are sworn enemies. Tell me what would happen if I were to strike you."

EL GATO lifted his limp hands lazily to his belt and said with a smile: "Try it, *mi profesor*."

"You see?" the teacher said, also smiling. "You invite me to try because you are surrounded by friends. This does not make you brave; only strong. Nor does my refusal to fight you make me a coward; only wise. In the end, because wisdom always wins over mere strength, I will defeat you. That is to say, Jorge Moncada will defeat General Huerta. Which is what happened, as you know."

The teacher walked back to his desk. When he turned, El Gato was still standing, glaring at him.

"You may be seated, Lico," the teacher said.

But this was only the beginning. It proved nothing. El Gato and his cronies had long practice in this business of smashing a teacher's spirit.

One day they would be silent, pretending not to hear when spoken to. Another time they would force the teacher to explain the most elementary instructions again and again.

Mostly, of course, they argued; sometimes with the teacher and sometimes among themselves. When they argued among themselves, the debates often led to blows. It was up to the teacher to stop such demonstrations, no?

This teacher ignored them. Turning to the blackboard, he called the quiet students to him and went on with the lessons. And the combatants, who brawled only in the hope that he would foolishly try to part them, soon tired and returned sullenly to their seats.

Of course, some of the other boys were frightened by these uprisings, and parents called at my house to protest.

ROSAS was very patient with them. "It will be difficult for a time," he explained. "And you are quite right: some innocent pupil may be hurt—though not seriously, I think. But what is the alternative? El Gato wants only one thing: to entice me into losing my temper and lifting my hand against him. If I do. . . . But, of course, I must not. By ignoring him I may discourage him. He is too intelligent to pursue a profitless campaign."

"Intelligent!" gasped Jaime Quintanille, the furniture maker.

"Gentlemen," the teacher said, "Lico Morales could be the top boy in the school. He earns excellent marks."

"He should be in jail!" muttered Diego Chamorro, the baker.

"I think not. And I think in time you will agree with me. If"—and here he smiled—"I live that long. . . ."

The parents agreed on one thing: that Señor Rosas was doing his best, and for that they admired him. My daughter, Teresa, admired him so much that she impulsively decided that she, too, must become a teacher.

Teresa was just seventeen, tall for her age. I had been extremely careful about the friends she selected and

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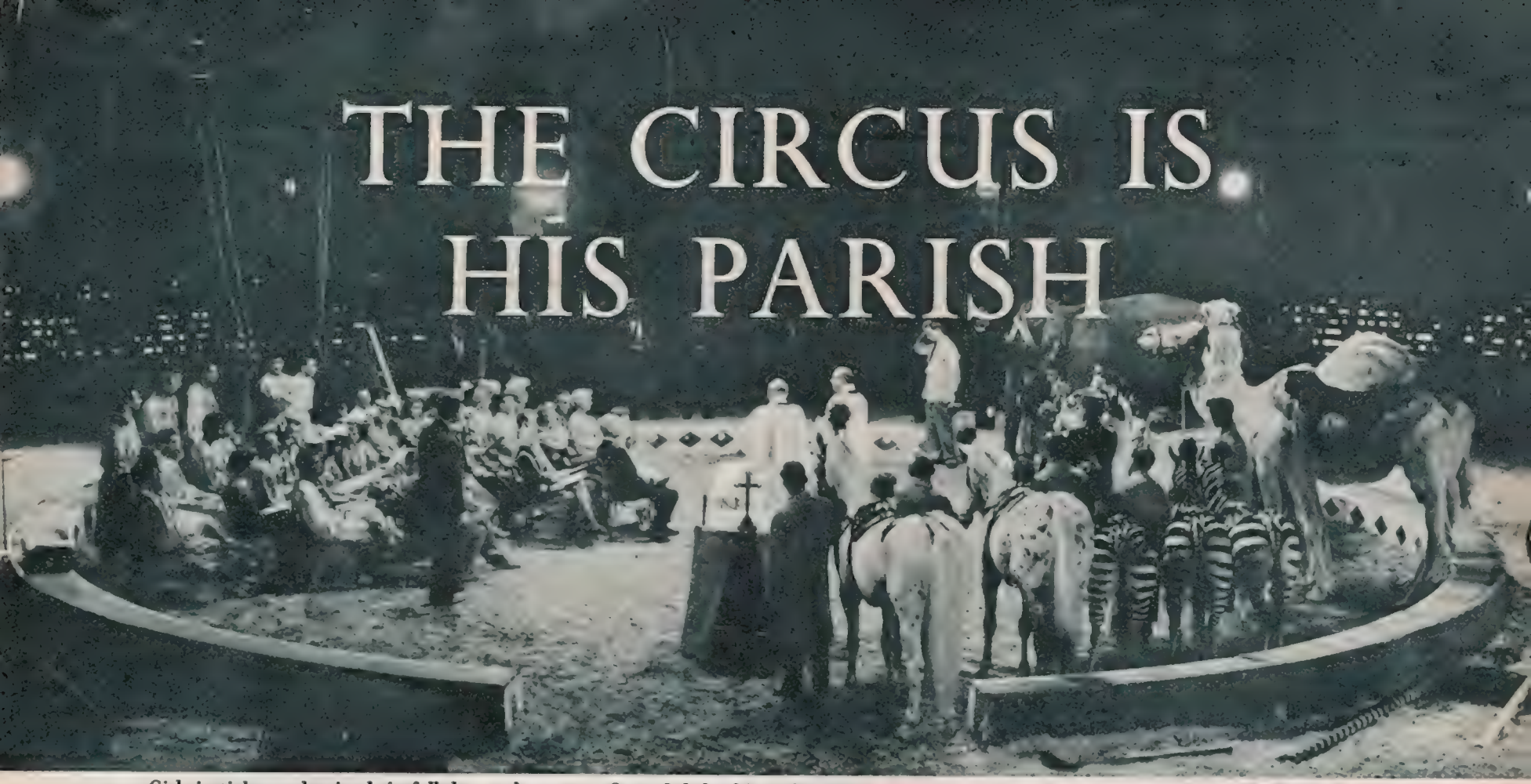
THE CIRCUS IS HIS PARISH



Girls in tights and animals in full dress take part as Omand, helped by a local parson, conducts a service in a circus ring at Folkestone

Padre Donald Omand is always welcome—to preach a sermon, bless lions or throw pies

by GEOFFREY HOWARD

A FEW weeks ago at a circus playing in the Dorset town of Bridport, a performing dog caused the audience much amusement by leaping from the ring and landing on the knee of a middle-aged clergyman.

It was retrieved by the ringmaster, after being plied with lumps of sugar, and continued its performance. But every now and then it was seen to glance affectionately at the clergyman.

A trained canine performer rarely breaks its act and many of those who watched the incident must have thought that the clergyman and the dog were friends of long standing. In fact, they had met for the first time only an hour previously, in the trainer's caravan. There, the dog, like many other circus animals, had taken an instinctive liking to the man who has made the circus his parish, the Reverend Dr. Donald Omand.

Officially, Dr. Omand is Rector of Winterbourne Abbas with Steepleton, two small villages in Dorset. In reality, his spiritual influence encompasses the earth, taking in any town, city or hamlet where a circus is appearing.

A stockily-built, essentially friendly man, whose kindly eyes tend to camouflage his strength of purpose, he has been carrying on his one-man ministry since the early thirties.

"But I'm not getting any younger," he says, "and there must be somebody to take over when I am no longer capable." So, at his instigation, a group of eminent churchmen and circus people have formed a new organization, "The Church in the Circus."

Under the patronage of the Bishop of Southwark, Dr. Mervyn Stockwood, it will finance and develop the work begun by Omand, who traces the beginning of his unique ministry back to a dramatic moment in a Berlin film studio.

Omand, who was lecturing in Germany on theology, was watching the shooting of a film which starred a live circus. Suddenly, to his horror, he saw a young trapeze artist misjudge his drop into the safety net and crash to the floor of the ring. The boy was taken to hospital in a critical condition, and Omand spent most of the night comforting the lad's mother and two sisters, who were also in the act.

The boy survived, and Omand was astonished by the warmth of the family's gratitude for the comfort he had given. As he says now: "All I did was what any parish priest would do for one of his parishioners."

News by grapevine

He was even more surprised when letters thanking him for his help arrived from circus artists he had never heard of, appearing in Europe, the Middle East and America. Unknown to Omand, news of the accident had spread on the circus grapevine.

Soon, other appeals for his spiritual guidance began to reach him. One of the first came from a clown appearing in a small circus in Berlin. Omand hurried to the Big Top, still wearing his leisure clothes, as the telephone call had sounded urgent. He was met by a ring attendant and taken to a trailer.

At the door stood a fat man with the build of an all-in wrestler. Because of his own casual attire, Omand was not put out when, after looking him up and down, the man exclaimed: "Nobody would guess what you are." But he was surprised when the man pointed to one of the trailer's wheels and went on, "Now let's see what you can do. Have a go at lifting that one off the ground."

Not yet the familiar figure he was to become, Omand, minus his dog collar, had been mistaken for a champion

From all over the world Omand is asked for help. Here he is about to christen the baby of a Danish sea-lion trainer

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weight lifter, expected for an audition.

The clown's problem was less urgent than Omand had feared. But before long he faced the real drama of circus life. Early one morning, he was roused from his bed to administer Holy Communion to a lion trainer. Afterwards the communicant grasped him by the hand. "Thanks, Padre," he said. "Sorry to disturb your sleep, but you may understand later how important it was to me."

Omand did. That afternoon the trainer was mauled to death by one of his lions.

As the months went by, Omand was welcomed into one of the closest communities on earth. Circus folk live in a world apart. To many of them, their lives depend on rigid self-discipline. They must perform to schedule, eat to schedule, relax to schedule, sleep to schedule. This demands almost total isolation from ordinary life. There can be few professions in which members work closer to death. Omand, as he grew to understand their mode of living, recognized their need for spiritual help.

Meeting this need presented him with a lot of problems. Language was the first barrier. He found that he was dealing with people not only cut off from the community outside but often from one another. Painstakingly he increased his knowledge of French, German, Italian and Spanish.

His toughest problem was the various religious creeds which might be represented in one circus alone. Somehow he had to find a common denominator.

They bow to fate

Most circus folk have a strong streak of fatalism mixed up with their religion. This was brought forcibly home to him one evening when he sat in a trailer ministering to a man dying from an incurable illness. Through the open window came the blare of the circus band. In the ring, the man's only relatives, true to tradition, carried on with their act.

When Omand thought the patient had only a few minutes left to live, he said as much to the old woman who was acting as nurse. To his surprise, she shook her head. "He won't be gone for another hour yet," she said softly. "Nobody of the circus dies *naturally* while the show is on."

It soon became obvious to Omand that the focal point of the circus people's existence was the Big Top. Anything connected with it was of tremendous importance to them—particularly the old traditional ceremonies such as the blessing of a new tent, the blessing of the animals and, most colourful of all, the baptism in the ring, in which artists and animals all join.

With the transition of the small family circus into the hands of big business, many of these ceremonies had been allowed to lapse. When he discovered that the denomination of the man officiating at them and the language he used mattered little, Omand set about reviving them.

He found, too, that most circus performers experience a great sense of loneliness. This causes many of the animal trainers to find their main companionship among the animals. Realizing that if he was to reach their hearts he must first be on good terms with their pets, Omand trained himself to approach even a potentially dangerous creature without showing fear.

One day he was faced with a fully-grown cobra, whose venom had not been removed. Without flinching, Omand laid his hands upon its head as he pronounced the time-honoured words of the blessing. He also insisted on entering the cages of lions and tigers to perform the ceremony. Such actions helped to win him the confidence of circus folk.

As his lecturing took Omand to other parts of the world, the boundaries of his new "parish" were extended. He has officiated at ceremonies in Hamburg, Berlin, Paris, Antwerp, Rome, Madrid and New York.

On one occasion he was blessing Condor, a chimpanzee. "I bless thee and all circus chimpanzees, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." For a moment, Condor appeared suitably impressed. Then he suddenly seized Omand's glasses and delightedly transferred them to his own face.

It was during his visit to California that Omand refused for the first and only time to officiate at a blessing. The organizers of a rodeo had invited him to do so in front of an audience. "I had no intention of turning into a publicity gimmick what is to me a strictly religious ceremony," he says. "I believe that God does indeed look down in love and compassion on those whom we, by virtue of our sacred office, bless in His name, whether they be animals or human beings."

Omand is convinced that such ceremonies do engender kindness and respect towards their animals, on the part of their trainers and also the circus children.

On a map in his study, coloured pins show the location of the various tenting circuses as they move about Britain. While his official work must always come first, somehow, even if it means a long, tiring journey on his day off, he will visit them as often as he can.

For a few hours he will become a "universal uncle." There will not only be baptisms and ceremonies to perform but scores of personal problems with which to wrestle.

Circus converts

He makes no attempt to turn adherents of one Christian church into followers of another. In his view, such an achievement would be a hollow victory. But he has been responsible for converting many non-Christians to the Faith, among them a complete troupe of Moslem tumblers. The male members of this troupe paid Omand what he still calls the greatest compliment of his life. Each had "Mohammed" as his middle name. Wishing to substitute for it one associated with their conversion, they all chose "Donald."

There is no stipend attached to Omand's ministry and for years he has carried it on without financial or physical help. But now, though he still says "there's plenty of life in the old man yet," there is one thing at which he draws the line.

Some years ago, half the artists of a German touring circus he was visiting went down with flu. The proprietor was in tears, for that day the local burgomaster was to see the show.

Omand volunteered to help out. Dressed in a gaudy blouse and baggy trousers, a vivid orange wig on his head and greasepaint daubed all over his face, he rushed into the ring with the clowns. All went well until the custard pies started to fly. An experienced clown knows just when to place himself in the path of one of these. Omand didn't, with the result that one went sailing past him out into the audience—and landed with a squelch on the head of the burgomaster.

"That," chuckles the padre to the Big Top, "was my last appearance as a circus *performer*." THE END

Women

Beloved is what a woman needs to be,
With preference for one selected man
Who vows to love her to eternity,
Although no doubt she knows he rarely can.
Admired is what a woman wants to be,
For charm or talent, speech or clothes or looks;
Envied for husband, home and children, she
Still wants approval of the way she cooks.
Beloved, admired and envied: even she
Most fortunate, knows that they cannot stay;
Ignored is what a woman will not be:
As every husband knows, there's hell to pay
Unless he listens to the things that he
Has done or not done, said or did not say!

DOUGLAS GIBSON

PERSONAL COLUMN

BRIGHT Eyes. Fifty years today since you left home. Have you forgotten? Long Legs.

THINKING saps the energy, destroys self-confidence, irritates your friends. Stop it now. Write in confidence. JB 312.

TITLED GENTLEMAN'S silver hip-warmer, uses hardly any charcoal, invisible in pocket. Also TITLED LADY'S patent egg-decapitator and TITLED YOUTH'S knuckle-duster, hardly used. JB 313.

ARE you troubled by SHOP STEWARDS? Bored ex-major, five years Commandos, undertakes confidential assignments. JB 314.

KEEP Britain Noisy! Bring klaxons, rattles, etc. to Anti-Silence League's Beat-the-cranks rally, 27th. Massed motor cycle orchestra and All-Britain Door-Slamming Finals.

A PUBLISHER wanted for history of hinges. JB 315.

BASEMENT room offered free to reliable couple in return for feeding Thing. JB 316.

WILL someone offer seaside holiday to partly reformed dope fiend, recently changed sex?

"MY Fair Lady." Four circle seats January 2 1958

E. S. TURNER

Take It Easy

In youth I ran and golfed and swam;
Athletics were my portion;
But nowadays the only thing
I exercise is caution.

NOEL SCOTT

Note From The Head

The reason why Peter was punished was not, as you suggest, a vendetta against him on the part of the staff caused by jealousy of his good looks, but simply that boys are not allowed to make offensive weapons in workshop periods.

Peter's attempt at a pearl-handled revolver as described in a thriller he was reading could be overlooked because it was unrecognizable; but it was impossible to overlook his magnetic mine. Fortunately his standard in chemistry makes it unlikely that he will master the manufacture of explosives for some time.

Luckily this also prevented his getting good results with an explosive boomerang; and when his attention was temporarily diverted to trying to make a harpoon-gun we all felt some relief, though the drain upon the supply of materials for handwork was severe.

However, a crisis was reached with his flame-thrower. The workmanship was rough; but the instructor said he was improving fast and the necessary steps to deal with the situation must be taken without further delay.

R. G. G. PRICE

No, Like This!

"I saw you playing with the baby from my bedroom window, so I came straight round."

"To lend a hand, no doubt."

"To stop you doing it the wrong way. What qualities are you trying to develop in her?"

"At the moment, mainly silence. As a neighbour surely you approve of that?"

"You ought to be strengthening her judgment of distances by holding things just out of reach so that she makes grabs for them and fails."

"I have no desire for my daughter to grow up a frustrated female."

"When you play with the child you should always be training her. At her age she should be learning to arrange bricks of different sizes in order. Purposeless play rots the character."

"She seems to prefer being rolled over and over and told that she's my Swiss roll. She really is an incurably frivolous child."

"It's important not to roll her in the same direction all the time."

"If I did that we'd have reached the sea by now."

"Oh, if you don't *want* me to help. . . ."

GEOFFREY RICHARDS

Salad oil, chops, chips . . . you can eat them all without fear of harming your heart

You <u>can</u> eat fat and keep fit

by Dr. PATRICK RICHARDSON

Now the experts explode the medical myth of our time. Pile up that plate—it even makes you slim

One of the discoverers of insulin, Dr. Charles Best, was recently invited to a conference of heart specialists in North America. On the eve of the meeting, out of respect for the widely held belief that edible fat helps to clog the arteries and cause coronary thrombosis ("heart attack"), a special banquet was prepared and served without fats.

It was unpalatable, but the specialists ate it as a duty.

Next morning, Best looked round the breakfast room. To his surprise, the same heart experts—mostly men in the coronary-prone age group of forty to sixty—were tucking into eggs, bacon, thickly buttered toast and coffee with cream.

Many of them, never ardent enough in the belief to banish fat from their own diets, still formally condemn it for other people.

Influenced by such men, doctors and their patients have for years regarded fat as a greasy bogy behind the increasing onslaughts of coronary thrombosis—now the biggest killer-disease in Britain.

A few years ago, when researchers claimed that deaths from coronary thrombosis were infrequent among some races which eat little fat, and that deaths had dropped during the war in countries with food shortages, thousands of coronary-conscious Britons began pushing fatty foods to the sides of their plates.

As the epidemic of coronaries has grown, a "don't give me any fat" approach to butchers and milkmen has forced scraggy, unfinished meat on to the home market and has threatened the Jersey cattle industry in America and Canada with ruin.

How far is this Jack Spratt attitude justified?

The truth is that it can't be justified at all. An inestimable number of people are needlessly denying themselves good food. In time to come, the fats-cause-heart-disease theory will probably be regarded as the medical myth of the decade. Many doctors now admit the fact.

Dr. Bronte Stewart, formerly of the Department of Medicine at Oxford and an originator of one version of the theory, recently stated frankly that the idea is "founded more on assumption than fact."

How, then, did the assumption come about? The connection is supposed to be that eating too much fat increases the amount of a waxy substance in the blood called cholesterol. Too much cholesterol leads to deposits on the walls of the arteries. These deposits, which look rather like a bit of porridge, are known as atheroma (from the Greek words *ather*, meaning porridge, and *oma*, meaning tumour). They create the conditions for an attack by narrowing the bore of the coronary arteries until one of them is blocked altogether, stopping the flow of blood to the heart.

But although atheroma is a fat-like substance, recent studies of deposits taken from the arteries of fifty-five men who had died of acute heart disease showed that it contains very little actual fat.

Not long ago, doctors who made a study of the non-fat-eating Bantu of South Africa—one of the races thought to be free from heart disease—discovered that it has, in fact, as many coronary thromboses as Londoners or New Yorkers, but the Bantu people do not die from them. A racial peculiarity has given the Bantu a richer blood supply to the heart muscle so that when one artery is blocked there are plenty more to take over.

Eskimo experiment

Moreover, although several countries had less coronary thrombosis during the war, not all ate less fat. Australia had fewer coronaries, but no less fat.

The idea that eating a lot of fat leads to bad health was discounted nearly forty years ago by Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, anthropologist, explorer and authority on the Eskimo. In their primitive state, Eskimos live entirely on fat but have very little heart disease. They get coronaries only when they adopt a civilized way of life.

Stefansson told sceptics in the world of medicine that a diet of animal fat and protein alone, with no vegetables, no added vitamins, no fruit, no cereals, bread or sugar of any kind, would not only keep men alive but would keep them fitter than the "balanced" diet advocated by orthodox nutritionists.

To prove his point he agreed to follow an all-meat diet for twelve months under strict medical supervision by a panel of doctors in Bellevue Hospital, New York. Among the dire results forecast were heart disease and death.

But at the end of the year, during which Stefansson averaged 2,650 calories a day, 2,100 consisting of fat, his blood cholesterol had fallen.

The same applied to a colleague of Stefansson's, Dr. Karsten Andersen, who had also undergone the test. Their cholesterol level rose again when they returned to an ordinary diet. Both men had kept fit while living on fat.

Last year I visited Stefansson at his home in Hanover, New Hampshire, and we talked about the myth surrounding dietary fat. I found him sprightly and alert at eighty. Over lunch, during which he melted butter on fat lamb chops, he said that in 1954, while on a mixed diet, he had had a mild stroke and suffered from arthritis.

"I decided to go back to Eskimo food," he told me. "After about six weeks on fat I found I could walk upstairs again without holding the banisters, and I could bend my knees, which had been quite stiff before."

Stefansson's doctrine was taken up by Dr. Blake Donaldson, a physician who had heard him lecture. Donaldson, who went on to make his name and fortune slimming overweight patients on unlimited quantities of fat meat, passed the method on to his friend, Dr. Alfred Pennington, who subsequently slimmed the executives of du Pont, the chemical firm, on a similar diet.

Not only did he reduce their weight, but he reduced their blood pressures.

This leads to another important aspect of the story. Although the good effect of weight reduction in preventing coronary thrombosis is generally accepted, the anti-fat preachers have always overlooked the fact that the safest, surest and most agreeable way of slimming is on a high-fat diet.

At the Tory party's much-publicised "bell-ringing" conference at Brighton in 1957, Lord Hailsham, wearing bathing trunks, posed for a series of press photographs which clearly emphasized his "middle-age spread."

By the 1958 conference, Hailsham was so much thinner that reporters asked how he had got rid of his weight. When he said that it was by eating fat, people thought he was joking.

Hailsham's secret

He was perfectly serious. Hailsham had used a method which, a hundred years earlier, had slimmed one of the fattest men in London.

William Banting, a fashionable undertaker, was almost spherical. Only 5 ft. 5 in. tall, he weighed 202 lb.

Banting's doctor had discovered that it is carbohydrate (starch and sugar) that fattens people, and that as long as substances containing carbohydrate are cut out of the diet, a fat person can eat as much fat and protein as he likes and still get slim. Nobody was prepared to believe it—except Banting.

For a year he refused to eat bread, potatoes and sugar, or drink beer. Instead he banquetted on fat beef, mutton, kidneys, fish, poultry and game, and washed them down with good claret, sherry and madeira.

At the end of twelve months he weighed 156 lb.—about right for his height and age. He had lost almost three and a half stones.

A few years ago, Banting's diet was tested on overweight patients at the Middlesex Hospital, London, by Professor Alan Kekwick and Dr. Gaston Pawan. They noted, among other things, that when the calorie intake for each patient was kept constant at one thousand a day, the most rapid loss of weight occurred on fatty diets, and

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LANCASTRIA · 2
by GEOFFREY BOND

After the bombs came confusion, then for lifebelts. In the water crowded boats

Survivors crowded higher and higher on the shrinking mound of hull as Lancastria sank—three miles off St. Nazaire. Fuel

Six thousand fight for life

Soldiers stood back to let Mrs. Clifford Tillyer, her baby daughter and husband into a lifeboat. It was one of the few launched successfully

THE huge 16,700-ton liner Lancastria, having tempted fate, lay dying. Since early morning on that Monday, June 17, 1940, she had been anchored off St. Nazaire, taking on troops evacuated from a defeated France. Her decks, holds and cabins were filled with more than six thousand infantrymen, gunners, engineers, pioneers, airmen and even thirty-eight civilians—employees of British-owned firms on the Continent; staff of the Church Army, Salvation Army and Y.M.C.A.

At about 2.15 p.m. she was given permission to leave for England, but her commander, Captain Rudolph Sharp, decided to wait in the hope of getting an escort across the U-boat infested Channel. It was a decision that made history. Now, at 4 p.m., the German dive-bombers had swooped.

The first bomb plunged into No. 2 hold in the foredeck with appalling havoc; it was packed with R.A.F. men. A soldier, blinded by the explosion, was taken below to the hospital. Just as the doctor was about to attend to him the second bomb dropped, killing all twelve people in the room.

Second-Lieutenant "Peter" Petit, of the Naafi, was alone in his cabin, dozing, when all the lights went out and the ship suddenly listed to starboard. His cabin was inboard, and the darkness was intense. It took him a second or two to remember where the door lay. No sooner had he found it than he realized that the alleyways outside were crowded to capacity; he was a prisoner until the troops could be got up on deck.

He heard stewards shepherding the bewildered men along, and so well was order kept that he reached the deck in a matter of minutes. He slithered across to the rails as the Lancastria listed sharply to port. Then he dragged himself along, making slow progress amid the confusion, until he was on the port side, where the scene was horrible in its turmoil.

Oil poured from the fractured fuel tanks below, and large numbers of men were jumping or being thrown into the black, sticky mass. On the deck above him, desperate attempts were being made to lower lifeboats. One man screamed an oath, looked at his hands unbelievingly and saw that three fingers had been lopped off by a madly spinning pulley. Some men slid down the falls, grunting with pain as the ropes cut their palms and burned blisters on the raw flesh.

A ship's engineer named Jones ran to a lifeboat forward, only to find that it had been lowered into the "gripes," or preventers. The boat was crammed with troops and he could not knock out the cleats to free the vessel. So he called for every man to get out again, then ran to the next boat forward.

Here he was joined by the ship's second officer, and together they started to lower away, though the falls were manned only at one end. While they were still busy, and the boat was halfway down, a German plane swept

panic as the doomed liner keeled over. On the sloping hull survivors groped capsized. And on men, women and babies German planes swooped, guns blazing

from the liner's tanks almost surrounded the ship. Then the Germans tried to set the sea ablaze with incendiary bombs

in a sea of oil

low over the keeling ship, machine-guns roaring.

The noise all around was frightening. Steam hissed from fractured pipes; crashes and thuds resounded as bulkheads collapsed below, and the shouts, moans and cries of thousands still fighting for their lives fused with the roar of the bombers overhead and the staccato bursts of machine-guns.

A pile of rifles slid down the open deck, some discharging as they tangled with obstacles.

And over all there came the noise of the great ship's siren, hurling a continuous wounded bellow at the sky.

Children in peril

A boat was lowered, full of women and children, with a few men to row it away. But before it touched the water it capsized, throwing out all its occupants and plunging its own three-ton weight among the screaming throng in the sea.

The ship was listing more heavily with every second.

A Roman Catholic army padre, Captain Charles McMenemy, had a cherished possession which he had succeeded in carrying through the French campaign. It was a pale blue inflatable mattress—a magnificent aid to comfort that came in particularly useful when he had to sleep on a hard floor.

On the way up from his cabin, two decks down, McMenemy saw two men without lifebelts. He had not claimed an ordinary issue one, for he was a strong swimmer, and now, as he saw the pair hesitating, he crossed to speak to them.

"Can you chaps swim?" he asked.

They shook their heads.

"Then take this." The padre held out the incongruous-looking blue mattress. "Get into the sea and climb on it. You'll be all right."

"Thank you, sir. But what about you?"

"Don't worry about me. I'll be safe enough. If God wills, many others will be, too."

In his quiet, sincere way he gave them a blessing, watched them go, and turned to move along the crowded deck.

An army officer, brandishing a service revolver, was forcing a group of men back below. "Get down there—for your own safety!" he kept shouting, thinking that he was saving them from machine-gun bullets, and never realizing that he was sending them to their deaths.

The Lancastria began to sink slowly at first, rocking gently from side to side. The first bomb, after entering through the top of No. 2 hold, blew away all chance of escape by stairway, before going out through the ship's side at an angle. Water poured between the fractured plates, and broken bodies were swirled about like matchsticks in a vast green whirlpool.

In the blackness of the hold, full of smoke, all was confusion. The broken cover above was ripped off, letting in a burst of white light which probed the appalling scene, making bizarre shadows in the smoky gloom.

Ropes were slung down and grabbed

Two non-swimmers almost dragged Major Jonathan Scott-Bowden under

Sergeant Alfred Garretts survived a hail of bullets—then caught cramp

As "Peter" Petit struggled in the sea he heard a mother cry for help

Chief Officer Grattidge supervised the rescue—and swam for his life

Lancastria

continued from previous page

despairingly. But there were too few ropes and too many trapped men who struggled down there among their dying companions.

As the ship settled deeper the water gushed up, dragging down bodies by its suction and at the same time lifting some, who guided themselves on the ropes, to the deck above, where they scrambled to safety and a second chance of life.

A quartermaster-sergeant of the Pioneer Corps was near the stokehold when he heard a scream from a French woman, who, with her eight-year-old child, was in imminent danger of being trapped by a falling partition.

He hurled himself up some stairs, with scalding steam pouring down from a split pipe overhead. The three of them clasped handkerchiefs to their faces to prevent themselves being burned, and reached the deck safely.

Someone shouted that there were twenty men still trapped in the bakehouse. An army lieutenant named Haynes fought his way down, but when he forced open the door a barrage of thick smoke gushed out, flinging him back, arms over eyes. Nobody could possibly have lived in there.

Major Jonathan Scott-Bowden, of the 53rd Company, Auxiliary Pioneer Corps, had been resting in his cabin with his shoes off, when he felt the ship expand and contract as if she was made of india-rubber. Then the deck tilted to an angle of forty-five degrees.

Treasured boots

The major was wearing his tunic and breeches. He sat up and reached for the pair of rubber boots which he always carried with him, and which he had steadfastly refused to jettison before.

During the recent campaign many fellow officers had asked his reason for carrying such strange accessories, but they never learned that one boot habitually contained a bottle of Johnny Walker (Black Label) and the other a bottle of Vichy water.

The major slung the boots round his neck on a string, seized his tin hat, and entered the corridor outside, his feet still bare. It was packed four or five deep with troops, unable to move either backwards or forwards.

The men, jammed as they were, slid about with the tilt of the ship, and soon Scott-Bowden found himself hanging on to a door handle, desperately trying to keep his balance. Once a man fell in that crush there would be no regaining his feet.

The officer turned the handle, wondering what lay behind. The door swung open to reveal iron staircases rising from the engine room. The major joined the engineers and stokers swarming up them.

On the boiler-room floor an engineer officer, who had just ordered his men up on deck, was about to follow when he deliberately went back and turned off all the steam, risking his own life in an attempt to save others.

"Peter" Petit dragged himself to the starboard side and suddenly remembered that a large sum of Naafi money was in a small leather case in his cabin. He thought of trying to retrieve it, but was halfway down a deserted companionway when he saw green water licking up the steps towards him. Somewhere below its surface lay his cabin and the case; no hope of getting it now.

He went back up the stairs to face hundreds of troops lining the side. Spotting three of his own men, he pushed his way to them. "Can any of you swim?" he asked. They did not have a lifebelt between them.

Their spokesman, a bright young Jewish soldier, said he could, but didn't want to leave the other boys. "I'll look after them," said Petit, helping the man over the rails and seeing him safely away. Many others standing nearby watched the man strike out confidently and plucked up courage to follow suit.

Meanwhile, Petit spoke to the remaining pair. Clearly one of them must be given his own lifebelt, but which?

"Either of you married?"

One nodded, and was handed the jacket, which he tied on, muttering brief thanks. Petit showed them how to share the lifebelt and, hanging together like runners in a three-legged race, the pair went over the side.

It was with the utmost relief that he later learned the trio had been picked up and landed in England.

Throughout the ship, both below and above decks, rescue work continued. Blast from one of the bombs had blown Wing Commander Arthur Martin against a deck rail fifteen feet away. Winded and semi-stunned he picked himself up, to hear a voice calling: "Casualties this way."

"This way, please, sir," the same voice repeated patiently, as though to a child, and he felt a hand under his elbow.

"But I'm not wounded . . ." Martin began, feeling mildly annoyed. Then he chanced to draw the back of one hand across his forehead. It came away smothered in blood. The voice chuckled: "Quite right, sir. You're not wounded. My mistake!" Martin never did find out whose blood it was.

Boat plunges down

Martin looked round to see what was happening at the lifeboats. None of them on his deck had been launched yet, so he crossed to the nearest, which some soldiers had just reached.

They were fumbling inexpertly with the ropes.

"Follow me," called Martin, telling the winders to keep time with his arm movements. They did so, and gradually the lifeboat swung down towards the sea, smoothly and easily. It had almost reached the water when a man, panicking, slashed at one of the ropes and severed it. The boat fell crookedly, shipping water and capsizing.

The wing commander saw a soldier jump overboard from the deck below. A steel helmet was on his head, its strap beneath his chin. On hitting the sea the man's head was jerked back, snapping his neck like a brittle twig. The body lay face down and drifted sluggishly away.

Martin grabbed a trailing fall from empty davits and swung himself out and over, easing his way down carefully for fear of scorching his hands.

Lost his hold

Immediately after him came another officer, knocking against him and causing him to lose his grip on the rope.

The two of them splashed into the sea together, cursing.

On board there was a mad rush for a companionway already choked with a struggling mass of men, most of whom had been asleep but a few minutes earlier, and who now reacted solely on their overstrained nerves.

On another deck, in complete contrast, a group of Church Army officials and Y.M.C.A. workers knelt in remote, quiet prayer. Their devotions concluded, the men rose and went about the practical task of getting as many non-swimmers away as was possible in the short time there was left.

One young padre, holding a Bible, made his way back below decks to comfort some hopelessly trapped men.

A sailor saw him go and called a warning, but the chaplain merely said: "I know—but those men need God!" He never returned.

A Church Army worker, Sister Gladys Trott, was being helped, with nine other women and five children, up to the boat deck.

She was about to enter a lifeboat in which some Belgian women were already seated when her friend, Sister Margaret Chamley, called out: "No, not that one!"

Together they clambered into a neighbouring boat. As they were being lowered, the first lifeboat hurtled past them, out of control, throwing its passengers into the sea.

Their own boat swung out, then tilted dangerously, and the women caught a horrifying glimpse of the water surging below them. They grasped the sides and somehow managed to remain in their seats. Just in time some men on deck saw that one end of the lifeboat had caught on the Lancastria's side. After a struggle they managed to push it clear, but it plunged half-way down before righting itself—then stuck again.

Its occupants hung there, helpless, not knowing what might happen next. A soldier put his head through a porthole, level with the boat, only a few yards away, and his eyes had the wild look of a trapped animal.

He noticed the lifebelts round the women's chests.

"Give us a chance," he called pitifully. "Those are our only hope."

Sister Trott realized what he meant. Quickly she untied the tapes, for she knew that at least she was free and could, if necessary, swim for her life. She tossed the lifebelt across to the soldier Her heart beat wildly. If the belt fell short—if he failed to catch it. . . .

But he caught it all right. Sister Chamley now handed her own lifebelt over.

It was successfully thrown to the man at the porthole just before the lifeboat fell smoothly into the sea.

Looking up, the women felt that the huge ship was about to roll over and crush them. It loomed high above, casting a great black shadow and eclipsing the sunny sky with its threatening bulk.

Clifford Tillyer, who worked for the Belgian associate company of Fairey Aviation, picked up his two-and-a-half year old daughter Jacqueline and with his wife pushed a way up several flights of ladders to the deck, repeatedly shouting: "There is a baby here—there's a baby here!"

All three of them were quickly admitted to a lifeboat, and though Tillyer and the other civilian employees of Fairey Aviation hung back after seeing their families settled, troops insisted that they, too, should get away.

The naked survivor

By the time a soldier named Paterson reached the deck the lifeboats had gone—those that could be got away—and crowds of men struggled together in the water, which lapped higher and higher across the sloping deck.

Others without lifebelts still clung to the ship's side, putting off the fateful moment when they, the non-swimmers, must all plunge into what seemed certain death.

Only then did Paterson feel the pain in his arms, which had been burned by the bomb blast.

Despite this he stripped off all his clothes and was standing completely naked when a man came up and offered him a lifebelt.

The two nude figures stood there, one adjusting the kapok belt carefully over the other's seared arms.

Despite the conditions surrounding them on all sides, the newcomer was absolutely calm. "Now, where's your tin hat?" came the quiet words. "Just in case they machine-gun us in the water."

Paterson did as he was told. "Good—follow me," was the next advice, for it could hardly be called a command. "Swim as hard as you can until we get clear of the ship. We don't want to get sucked under."

Without another word the two flung themselves overboard, and were soon striking out strongly. Though the burned man's arms must have been throbbing with pain it was forgotten in the excitement of the moment.

Somehow the pair became separated and Paterson never saw his helper again.

Men milled round below, helpless in the sudden darkness of a cabin. They found a porthole and kicked it outwards.

It lay at a steep angle, pointing down towards the sea.

A burly sailor, dressed only in trousers and a vest, thrust his head and shoulders through the porthole, groping at something outside.

"There's a rope here," came his muffled cry, "but I can't reach it." He was too heavily built to ease himself

Gladys Trott and Margaret Chamley of the Church Army decided to change boats—and escaped death. Then they gave up their lifebelts

Will your child be taught by machine?

by Dr. FRANK GEORGE

Already robots are here. Soon they'll invade our schools

Typists and keyboard girls can now be taught by machine. If mistakes are made the "teacher" slows down

TEACHING machines which could take over a good deal of the schoolmaster's work are no longer a dream of the future. They already exist, so that it is possible to contemplate the time when children will be taught by machines.

Many parents may find this an appalling idea. It seems inhuman, and so it is. But this prejudice against machinery, which can be seen whenever automation is suggested, is one which we must cure in ourselves. For these changes are coming, whether we like them or not.

At present these machines are used only for such things as teaching touch typewriting or training operators for radar sets. But they could be adapted to teach almost any school subject—even ones so imprecise as painting or cookery, though these are probably best taught by human instructors.

How the teaching machine works is well illustrated by the training of radar operators, who have to learn to track a wave signal on a radar screen.

Gordon Pask, an electronics expert, has designed a radar simulator which imitates the behaviour of an actual radar set. It is connected to an electronic teaching machine which takes note of where the signal is on the screen and where the operator, judging by his actions, thinks it is. The machine can calculate the degree of error and, as the student masters a particular task, move on automatically to something more difficult.

Machine teaching is not a purely mechanical or routine process, for machines have been built which adapt themselves completely to the individual student's progress. They not only note the mistakes he makes, but also detect trends in his errors. They find out why he has gone wrong. Then they arrange future instruction so as to change the biases and the mistaken ideas he has exhibited.

It is easy to see how all this could be applied to teaching in schools. The basic principle is a process called a feedback of information. In a game of darts, it is obvious that if we did not see that our first dart was too low we should not know that the next one must be thrown higher. This is a feedback of information.

A similar process goes on now in every classroom, where the teacher discerns which are the bright children and which are the dull. But the information which comes to him is generalized and inaccurate and is gathered slowly. A teaching machine would base every question accurately on information fed back to it by an individual child a split second before.

If teaching machines come into use, the schoolroom of the future will have a television screen and microphone on each student's desk. Classes as we now know them will be a thing of the past, for each child will be an independent unit and will be treated as such.

To teach languages or sciences, for example, the machine will exhibit on the screen information similar to that now found in school textbooks and will then flash questions testing the pupil's knowledge. The student can answer into the microphone or write his answer and feed it into the machine.

Teacher's drudge

In this way children will spend more time learning for themselves, and the routine things which they must learn and may find difficult on their own can be run quickly through the teaching machine, which will gear itself to the speed of the pupil's progress.

Something may be lost, especially in teaching the arts, through the pupil missing contact with the personality of the teacher. But teaching staffs will be freed from the present drudgery of trying to teach overcrowded classes and will be able to devote their attention to supervising the work of the machines and giving individual attention to children who need it most.

Fewer teachers will be needed, but their status will be raised.

All this sounds as though it would cost a lot of money, but it need not. A digital computer (or electronic brain, as it is usually called) may now cost about £75,000 to buy and some thousands of pounds a year to run. But new methods of building computers are being developed which are likely to mean that they can be made for about a quarter of the present price and perhaps even less.

More important, one machine would be able to teach as many as 150 pupils at the same time.

It can do this because it operates about a hundred times as fast as the child could possibly work. In fact, it would drive a child mad to try to answer questions as fast as the machine could feed them to him. Anyone who has played noughts and crosses against a computer will know that the most disconcerting thing is that no sooner have you put your cross than the computer's next nought appears like a flash. A teaching machine would regulate the speed of its questions and answers to suit the individual pupil, which means that it could handle 150 of them with ease. It could even be set so that it would change the subject as soon as a child began to show signs of fatigue or boredom.

Machines would have to be introduced gradually, and a start could be made by trying them out in one or two schools. Before this can be done the teachers themselves will have to get used to the idea. When three prominent people connected with education were recently asked about these machines, the response in each case was that they had never heard of them.

All of them were impressed, but rather horrified, when the capabilities of the machines were explained to them. This was an aspect of the new world of automation which had never occurred to them. Each of them had been too busy to give it any serious thought—too busy fighting battles of education with weapons which are fifty years out of date.

THE END

through the aperture. His companions tried to push him, but it was impossible.

The men behind were now getting restive. The sailor had to drop back, red-faced with his efforts, and allow the others to take their turn. They all made it easily. There was little to be said, and each man scrambled through, sick at heart, while the seaman stood by until he was quite alone in that black, sea-locked cell from which he had no escape.

Padre McMenemy joined a member of the ship's crew and another soldier in trying to free one of the rafts which was still secured.

Although the three of them worked hard and fast, the water was soon rippling over their hands, swelling the knots and preventing the men from unravelling them.

The sailor was the first to abandon the attempt, making for the side and disappearing into the crowded sea. The other two exchanged a glance. There would be no getting the raft away now. The water had won.

Together they walked to the side. There was no need to jump; they stepped over and began to swim. Only the padre survived.

The deck, now nearly under water, was littered with men fighting for life, where a few minutes before they had been laughing and joking as they waited patiently to leave for Blighty.

Improvised rafts

The ship's carpenter led a party to his workshop, situated in the forepart. Inside was a stack of old doors and stout planks which they threw overboard for use as improvised rafts.

During this time the Lancastria had been steadily settling down by the head and within minutes the foredeck was about eighteen inches under water. A sergeant named Alec Picken forced his way to the side and looked down. He was very frightened. He had no lifebelt and, like so many others, was unable to swim. Being on the sinking ship gave him a strange feeling of security, though common sense told him that every minute he waited there his position would become more dangerous.

Almost reluctantly he began to strip off, folding his clothes neatly and laying them in a tidy pile at his feet.

Gingerly he approached the rail. It did not seem possible that anyone could dive overboard without hitting somebody—alive or dead—or some object, such as a hatch cover or a floating chair.

Picken plunged over and found himself struggling in a semi-submerged lifeboat with a shattered bottom. A short while previously it had been launched, chock-a-block with soldiers; but something had gone wrong. It had fallen at a tremendous pace, hitting the water with a crack like a bursting Mills bomb. So great was the impact that the bottom caved in like an egg shell, and the occupants had been thrown out in all directions.

Picken managed to claw his way out of the wreckage, and while still hanging on to the lifeboat's gunwale a kitbag rolled off the Lancastria's deck and fell into the sea within arm's reach.

The n.c.o. made a dive for it, pushed it beneath his left arm to act as a sort of lifebelt, then began to strike out for all he was worth.

Judging by the angle of the Lancastria it could not be long now before she took the final plunge, and anyone still remaining close by stood in grave danger of being sucked under.

To the sergeant's satisfaction and

continued on page 26

OTHERWIS ENGA

by BRETON AMIS

ILLUSTRATED BY COLEMAN

When a man has a foolproof system for keeping women at bay, what is he going to do if he falls in love?

ERNEST PASCOE had come to Gooseberry Cottage to write his third book on new trends in industrial development. Driving through Mallow, a thatched and slumbrous village, he had seen it as a place where an economist could get his facts and figures in the right perspective; so he had rented the cottage for a year and was finding it had only one flaw.

Mrs. Gussock went with it. Pascoe was spending more time on scheming how to get rid of Mrs. Gussock than he was on his book.

He had even offered her a long, paid holiday with her ailing sister, Kate, but she wouldn't hear of it.

"Who would look after you, sir?" she had asked fondly; and when Pascoe said he could look after himself, her large body had rocked with silent mirth.

Mrs. Gussock kept the cottage spotless and cooked like an angel; but she also regarded a well-off bachelor in his early thirties as a challenge to her and the whole village.

Home-made marmalade appeared on Pascoe's breakfast table. "From Miss Wallace at the vicarage, sir," Mrs. Gussock told him. "A rare fine girl she is, and as pretty as a picture. Shouldn't you ought to call on the vicar, sir, him being another like you, with his books and his pipes?"

ROSES appeared in his vases. "Grown by Mrs. Deakin, the doctor's widow, sir," Mrs. Gussock said. "Have you seen her garden? I dropped a hint that you'd like to, you being so fond of flowers, and she said please do."

His tea was served in a misshapen cup with dandelions sprawling over it. "Miss Prue Collins, sir, of the Pottery Parlour. Makes them herself, she does, plates as well, with her own little poems on them; so she's more or less in the same line as yourself, sir."

To Mrs. Gussock, writing books meant love stories. Pascoe had tried to explain that his were textbooks; but that only reminded her of the Love Thy Neighbour text over his bed, and how careful one had to be of texts, because Mr. Pascoe's neighbours in Loganberry Cottage and Cherry Cottage were married women.

All Pascoe wanted was to be left in peace, and that was something Mrs. Gussock couldn't allow. She hovered over him, duster in hand, her china blue eyes moistly maternal.

"How's it coming, sir?" she asked. "I couldn't help seeing something about a marriage for money, and if you ask me, marriage without love is like pork without the crackling."

Pascoe had titled chapter seven "The Marriage of Money to Production," and now he rightly assumed that Mrs. Gussock dusted inside his desk whenever he went for a stroll. Not being able to make head or tail of his typescript, she drew her own conclusions. Love. Marriage. Money. What else would he be writing about, at his age?

When Pascoe told her that no sane woman would put up with him, she gurgled and quaked.

"Give them half a chance, sir, just half a chance. I wouldn't call you handsome, you being so tall and thin, but you've a nice wave in your hair, and the kindest of hearts. Not marry, indeed! But there, you're always one for a joke."

That astounded Pascoe, who found it impossible to equate his sense of humour, if any, with Mrs. Gussock's.

"Grilled steak for lunch, sir," she went on, "with mushrooms from Mrs. Dibden, who grows them."

"Another widow?" Pascoe asked bitterly. "Was it the mushrooms?"

Mrs. Gussock rocked. "There you go again, sir. You'll be the death of me. Bert Dibden is still alive, but between you and me he's ailing fast, and she's such a patient, long-suffering lady, just the sort you could put in your books. . . ."

When Mrs. Gussock went to the kitchen, Pascoe pushed his portable aside, his morning ruined. He was very angry. If he didn't get some peace, he would have to move on, and Gooseberry Cottage suited him.

Taking a pad from a drawer he began writing, in a hand that was elegant and almost feminine.

My darling Ernest,

Are you missing me? How I wish I were in your arms again, your lips on mine, our hearts beating as one. Oh, for those mad bad moments! Whenever I think of your kisses I shiver. . . .

Pascoe grinned, and wrote on:

Come to me, lover, when you have finished your book, and we'll tell my father our secret. I can hardly wait for the day when I shall call you—husband.

He signed this, *Your ever-loving Penelope,* crumpled the sheet of paper a little, and put it in the top drawer with some rose petals. Then he went for a walk over the downs and returned to lunch with a hearty appetite.

Mrs. Gussock's demeanour, he noted, had changed. He was now a man with a secret, and a love secret at that.

Mrs. Gussock peppered his mushrooms coyly. "I've done some tomatoes as well, sir. Round here we still call them love apples."

"Do you?" Pascoe smiled. "I'm afraid I don't know much about love, Mrs. Gussock."

MRS. GUSSOCK didn't say anything. Her eyes said: "You can't fool me," but also gave Pascoe to understand that her lips were sealed. He hoped they would remain that way.

His ruse seemed to have worked. He wrote late and slept like a top. No other females were thrown at him and he imagined all was well; until, a week later, Mrs. Gussock said, elaborately casual: "Not much mail these days, sir."

Pascoe realized he had been remiss. He scribbled a hasty note to himself.

My dearest Ernest,

It could be an elopement if Father won't consent. He says writers are always penniless and immoral, but even if you were, I'd still love you. Don't work too hard, darling. From what you write, your Mrs. Gussock must be a treasure, and I'd be jealous if she were thirty years younger. Silly me!

Serving him with golden pudding at lunch that day, Mrs. Gussock mentioned that she had been considered quite comely in her twenties, and that her husband said she still was.

"But it's youth that counts," she added sagely. "Youth and hot blood. My dad was against Sam, not taking naturally to water bailiffs, and do you know what we did, sir?"

"I hope you didn't get married without his consent," Pascoe said gravely.

Mrs. Gussock spluttered and choked. "Now fancy you guessing that, sir. Where there's a will there's a way, and never once did we regret it. Call it true love, if you like."

Pascoe went out for a walk. He was now trying to equate a fall in coal output with rising steel production. Lighting his pipe, he headed for the downs and had nearly reached them when an unnoticed cloud burst above him. He ran for some trees, then wheeled towards a barn, feeling the rain on his head.

In the barn he had loosened his collar and was rubbing his hair with a handkerchief when he saw he was not alone.

"Don't mind me," the girl said cheerfully. "I had to sprint for it as well, but I was nearer." She glanced out of the door.

SHE was a slim ash-blonde, so pretty that she seemed dazzling in the hay-scented gloom. Torn from its problems, Pascoe's mind absorbed her slowly and with great pleasure, until he realized that he was staring.

"Sorry to intrude," he said. "It'll be short and sharp. My housekeeper wanted me to bring a raincoat, but I hate carrying things when I'm walking."

"Me, too, even a handbag." She touched her hair as if wishing she had a comb. "Mrs. Gussock is your housekeeper, isn't she? She's a darling." When Pascoe looked surprised she added: "I'm Joan Wallace, and my father's the vicar. We've heard a lot about you, Mr. Pascoe. Sorry, but that's the way it is, in a village."

"This could be embarrassing," Pascoe said. "What have you heard?"

"That you write books, that you're very polite and a little bit deaf. . . ." She laughed. "You don't have to explain that. And I know you like home-made marmalade because Mrs. Gussock asked for a pot of mine."

"It was delicious," Pascoe said truthfully, "but she should have asked you for the recipe."

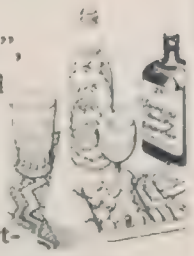
"Six pounds of Sevilles to twelve pounds of sugar, plus plenty of hard labour. How does that strike you, as an economist?" Her blue eyes sparkled. "I know you are one, because Father read an article by you in a Sunday paper."

Pascoe said, "I wish Mrs. Gussock took the

Joan Wallace was so pretty that she seemed dazzling in the hay-scented gloom. Pascoe caught himself staring

THIS is the Gin . .

. . . FOR A REVIVING
'GIN AND LIME'



Some say "Gimlet", some say "Gin and Lime"—but all agree that this refreshing favourite is all the more heartening if you make it correctly . . . thus: Half-fill shaker with ice, add 2/3 Gordon's* Gin, 1/3 lime juice, and a small dash of bitters; shake well, and top up with soda water.

*ASK FOR IT BY NAME

Gordon's
Stands Supreme

Otherwise engaged

continued from previous page

same paper. She persists in the belief that I write romances."

They chatted until the rain stopped, then the girl said she must go home, and Pascoe thought he'd better turn back as well, because more showers were coming.

"Let Father give you a glass of sherry," she offered. "From Spain, like the oranges—and the rain."

"I'd love it," Pascoe said gaily.

He returned to Gooseberry Cottage an hour later, bemused, and with an invitation to dine at the vicarage the next day. As he worked mostly in the evenings he had been amazed by his eager acceptance, and had then realized, with a shock of alarm, that he had fallen in love. It had hit him as suddenly as the rain shower. There was nothing to account for it, except that Joan Wallace was pretty, lively, intelligent. The hour had passed in a blissful haze, not induced by the sherry or the vicar's pleasant bumbling.

HE ate his lunch in silence, unaware that he was the object of a keen and anxious scrutiny, until Mrs. Gussock could no longer contain herself.

"The baker says you were at the vicarage, sir," she remarked.

"I looked in to pay my compliments," Pascoe said, abstractedly, "and I'll be dining there tomorrow night."

"Should you, sir?" Mrs. Gussock flicked some crumbs into her palm. "I mean, I noticed the vicar had a nasty cold on Sunday, and what with you being caught in the rain. . . ."

"I took shelter," he explained. "That's how I met Miss Wallace, who seems to be as charming as I think you once said."

"Did you, now?" Mrs. Gussock's mouth pursed. "Is there anything else, sir?"

Pascoe said there wasn't. He was remembering those idiotic letters he had written to himself, and not feeling too happy about them. Mrs. Gussock was a gossip, but surely she wouldn't retail tit-bits from his private correspondence? Supposing, for instance, Joan Wallace had heard that he was secretly engaged to a passionate creature named Penelope?

No, Joan hadn't heard—a man in love could sense such things. But she might, if Mrs. Gussock thought it her duty, as one woman to another, to give her warning that he wasn't free.

That shook him. He half rose to call Mrs. Gussock to him and explain the joke, but feared that her sense of humour wouldn't rise to it. Either she would disbelieve him, or else be deeply offended and hurt. Pascoe didn't want to hurt her. It hadn't been kind to lead a warm-hearted woman up the garden path merely because her romantic ideas bothered him.

And in these early stages he dare not tell Joan of his innocent deception. She might take a poor view of a man who made fun of serious matters such as love. She saw him as an earnest young economist grappling with world problems, and Mrs. Gussock could hardly be described as that.

Pascoe slept badly, but in the morning it dawned on him that his problem had a simple solution. He reached for his writing pad and wrote:

My dear Ernest,

I am afraid that this will come as a great shock to you, but all is over between us. No, it isn't Father, though I now know how right he was. You and I were never intended for one another, or you wouldn't have left me and gone away to write your book. Can you guess what has happened, Ernest?

Pascoe couldn't at first; but again it came:

I've met someone else, someone I really love. He is a company director—Imperial Holdings, Blue Chips, and The Gold Trust—immensely wealthy, with a yacht at Cowes and a villa at Cannes. I put you on your honour to keep our secret, because he thinks his are the only lips that have ever claimed mine.

Please forgive me and forget me. I hope Mrs. Gussock continues to take good care of you, worthy soul that she is.

Signing this simply *Penelope*, Pascoe wondered if it was fair to make the girl such a nasty little money-grub. But this letter to end all had to be intelligible to the romantic Mrs. Gussock.

Rolling the missive into a ball, he threw it into the waste paper basket, where it was bound to be found. . . .

After bread-and-cheese and beer at the village inn, he returned to Gooseberry Cottage to tell her he had no appetite for lunch. She seemed to understand. Silent for once, her eyes blue lakes of pity, she brought him a cup of tea and left him to his sorrow.

Pascoe put in an afternoon's work, and hoped Joan's cooking was as good as her marmalade. By now he was so steeped in cunning that he asked Mrs. Gussock to take a message that he was unable to keep his dinner date.

"I'm not in a mood for company," he mourned.

"But, sir, that's the very thing you must have when you're so down," she urged. "Good company, they say, is like good wine that gladdens the hearts of men. Miss Joan would be so disappointed, and butcher says it's to be English sirloin—your favourite. Do change your mind."

PASCOE sighed. "Should I? I've an ache somewhere. . . ." He touched his head and his heart. "But these things pass, don't they, Mrs. Gussock?"

"Time is the great healer, sir," she comforted. "Would it be that you've had a shock?"

"I'll live," Pascoe said bravely.

From that moment his affairs undeservedly took a decided turn for the better. His work was brilliant; he saw Joan every day; he was soon gloriously certain that the attraction was mutual.

A fortnight after their first meeting she was in his arms, being soundly kissed, in the same barn where they were sheltering from another shower. This time, neither noticed when the rain stopped.

"I loved you the moment I saw you mopping your hair," she said dreamily, "but you looked so grim and serious I never thought you'd fall for me. Was it the orange marmalade?"

"It was you," Pascoe said firmly. "I'd been thinking of coal output, then suddenly I saw you and for the very first time I began thinking of love. I wanted to kiss you then. I still do."

"Mrs. Gussock is right—you ought to write love stories," Joan said.

Pascoe gave a guilty start and changed the subject.

"It's time we were engaged, Joan. May I call on your father tonight?"

"If he says no, we'll elope—but he won't."

AGAIN Pascoe's conscience smote him. He would make it up to Mrs. Gussock in the happy years to come. She should run the cottage for them while they made love and marmalade. Penelope didn't know what she was missing.

But when he arrived at the vicarage that evening, Joan met him, stony-faced.

"It's all off," she said.

Pascoe felt exactly as he should have felt when Penelope jilted him.

"Off?" he gasped. "Joan, you can't mean——"

"I do," she said coldly. "You came to me on the rebound, on the very day that horrible girl turned you down. All your talk of loving me at sight was a lie. You were engaged to her, planning to marry her——"

"Mrs. Gussock has been talking," Pascoe cried. "There is no other girl, Joan, darling. She was merely a figment of my imagination."

"Do figments write love letters—do economists have imaginations?" she demanded. "Don't blame Mrs. Gussock. She thought it would make me love you more to know how you'd been treated, but it didn't. I hate you. The other girl probably knew you better than I do."

She burst into tears. Cursing himself and Mrs. Gussock, Pascoe tried to explain, but she wouldn't listen. She ran from the room, leaving him to show himself out.

Pascoe rushed home in a rage that evaporated before he reached Gooseberry Cottage. How could he blame Mrs. Gussock for his own sins? She had only tried to help.

The book meant nothing to him now. He picked it up to hurl it into the wastepaper basket, but saw his letter there, not quite so crumpled.

Reaching for his writing pad, he wrote.

Darling, darling Joan,

Compare the handwriting of the enclosed letter with this one, and you'll see that Penelope and I are the same person. I'm ashamed of myself, but I only wanted peace from Mrs. Gussock's attempts to marry me off. Now I want you. I love you, I love you. Give Mrs. Gussock another pot of marmalade if I can come at once and tell you so.

He sent Mrs. Gussock with the letters. She came back perplexed.

"Yes, she was in, sir, and she gave me another pot of marmalade."

Pascoe kissed Mrs. Gussock.

"Put it in the storeroom," he said gaily. "We're going to need it before long."

He dashed off, leaving Mrs. Gussock panting and puffing from his hug. Writers were like that, she supposed. But she mustn't tell Sam. Husbands were jealous creatures. THE END

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NEIGHBOURS—1

There is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbours good. One person I have to make good: myself. But my duty to my neighbour is much more nearly expressed by saying that I have to make him happy.

R. L. Stevenson

NEXT WEEK'S STORIES

a gripping story of one man's feud with a crocodile
A TROPHY FOR BULDEO by NORAH BURKE

a gay, hilarious romp
BEPPO'S DAY OUT
by PATRICK RYAN

The flat that nobody wanted

It was tucked away under the roof—a jumble of odd-shaped rooms. But one person saw it all differently

In the bedroom Susan has let herself go with yards of rose-patterned chintz, quilted for the bedspread, lined with pink lawn for the canopy. Full length curtains disguise the sloping walls, leaving space behind them for trolley-borne television and radiogram. A pair of old bed steps make useful bedside tables

At one sale Susan accidentally bought a piano stool and a coffee table at bargain prices. The piano stool, re-covered with pink velvet, makes an elegant bedroom seat. The dressing table is a ninety-year-old rosewood sofa table, bought for £12, which does double duty as a dining table for special occasions

SOME people are just lucky. Or so it seems. But beneath the lucky surface you can generally find a streak of character which makes the luck work. I thought Susan Franks was lucky when I found her installed in a spruce West End flat. Other people spend years searching for a flat like this. But in six weeks Susan had found, decorated and furnished the place and settled in. There she sat, purring like a cat with a couple of kippers.

I felt like that other cat—the one who was killed by curiosity. Susan is a worker. I knew that she did not have a lot of money to spend nor much time or taste for domestic chores. How had she discovered this place, made it so elegant, found time to run it?

The flat had been advertised in an evening paper. It had been on an agent's books for six months, and the rent was reasonable. But hundreds of people had turned it down. Why? It was on the top floor of a tall building. It was dirty and neglected. The walls sloped inwards. The rooms were oddly shaped and linked by long passages. A twist in the stairs barred the entry of bulky furniture. Some or all of these snags had discouraged other and more timid flat hunters; but they did not discourage Susan. Against the drawbacks she set the merits of the place. The rooms were large and light; there was a lift, central heating, constant hot water, plenty of large cupboards and access to the roof which had possibilities as a sun-trap garden. In her mind's eye she saw the rooms newly painted, a few good pieces of furniture and plenty of uncluttered space. So, on the strength of her vision, she took the flat.

Susan had never had a flat before but she was tired of bed-sitters. With good management, she was convinced, a flat could be just as easy for a working girl to run and much easier to keep tidy without squandering too much time on

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

Susan likes to keep her possessions out of the way but mobile, and produced drinks from a trolley wheeled out of the big sitting-room cupboard. This unpromising room (above) was transformed by moving the radiator, installing a charming bogus fireplace as a centrepiece, and setting green and nasturtium-coloured upholstery and yellow curtains against dead white walls

The dull bathroom, with a dado of black and cream tiles, was transformed with washable rose-patterned wallpaper and cheap pink-glazed cotton curtains. A basin curtain hides Victorian plumbing

Tapestry embroidery has become a passion with Susan. It started with an embroidered panel which she bought in a job lot and used to cover the round cushion on the left. Now Susan is busy working on a set to match. The colours in the decor of the room—green, yellow and nasturtium—are taken from the original panel

To disguise the pipes and cables which disfigured the original kitchen walls (above) a false wall of hardboard has been added. Built-in bench seats, upholstered in easily cleaned white plastic, and a yellow Formica folding table make a space-saving dining corner. The box seats provide useful storage space. Extra folding chairs are stowed away in a nearby cupboard. Two of the kitchen walls are painted blue, two yellow

housework. She had a plan for the job. Furniture must be reduced to a minimum and kept, as far as possible, off the floor; surfaces must be clear for easy dusting; floors flush-covered with carpet or lino. Possessions must be stowed away in cupboards and everything possible—radiogram, television set, drinks trolley—must be on wheels. Food, except on state occasions, would be eaten in the kitchen and washing up firmly faced after every meal.

Before these splendid principles could be put into practice, three rooms and a kitchen had to be furnished. Susan had been saving up for the job but she still had to manage it on a minimum budget. Preferring the elegance and craftsmanship of old furniture, she went to sales and soon became an addict with a flair for a bargain. She had beginner's luck, too, buying odd lots for the sake of one piece she wanted and reselling the unwanted junk at the next sale. In this way she picked a couple of solid chests of drawers for 30s. each, a supply of mattresses and cushions for the roof garden for 10s.

Decorations were the simplest possible—white walls and woodwork everywhere, with colour and pattern concentrated in curtains, bedspreads, chair covers and cushions. One extravagance Susan allowed herself for comfort and ease of upkeep—plain green, wall to wall carpeting in every room.

I still think Susan is lucky—lucky to have had the imagination to see in those dismal attic rooms the possibilities of this delicious flat; lucky to have had the courage to back her hunch and take the plunge.

ROGER SMITHELLS WILL HELP YOU

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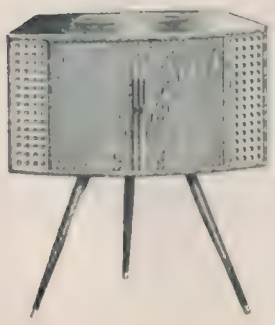

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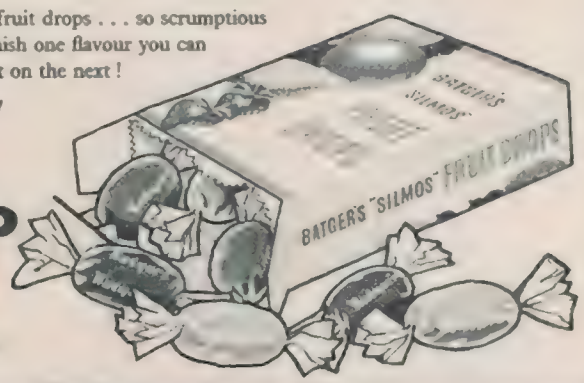

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Lancastria

continued from page 19

vague surprise he began to make headway. He never knew how long it was that he clung to the kit bag, but gradually it became heavier as the clothing inside absorbed the water.

Down it went, sinking slowly, and Picken only let go when the waves met over his head.

He shot up to the surface again and splashed about wildly for a second or two on the verge of sheer panic. Then one of his arms hit something and the stinging pain made him grasp it automatically.

It was a lifeboat oar. He hung on grimly, tucking it under both arms. Not far away a German plane unloaded a stick of bombs, and Picken found himself lifted clean out of the sea. But he clung to the oar still and remained unhurt. At the back of his mind he was praying.

He kicked out with his legs and propelled himself slowly forward, seeing only the heaving green water and feeling it wash against his throat.

Two on the oar

An exhausted swimmer came alongside, his face white and mouth agape as he fought for breath.

"I can't hold out any longer, mate," he whispered.

The sergeant stretched out a hand and caught hold of the man's shoulder, pulling him up against the wood.

"Hold on to the other end," Picken said. Thankfully the swimmer grasped the broad blade.

Four white lines cut across the sea, making straight for the men on the oar.

"They're machine-gunning us," Picken shouted.

On zipped the bullets, cleaving long streams of foam. The lines reached and passed the oar. Picken looked round. He was completely unscathed, having by the most amazing chance been between two lanes of bullets.

But the man at the other end of the oar sagged, losing his hold. The sergeant caught a glimpse of a clean, neat hole in his forehead.

At that moment an officer still on board the sinking liner shot himself, rather than risk the fate which lay in the dark waters.

Major Scott-Bowden was forced to abandon his bottles of Johnny Walker (Black Label) and Vichy water, and put on his boots. They afforded a valuable grip on the slippery deck, for the stern of the ship was practically at water level and part of the starboard side was almost awash.

The Lancastria was heeling over sharply. A solitary lifeboat still rested on the liner's side, and a group of men were trying to release it. The pulley blocks would not work because the davits had swung inwards.

Scott-Bowden felt for his pocket-knife, opened it and cut through the ropes, releasing the boat. A knot of troops swarmed in.

It was full to standing when it finally entered the sea and every passing second showed that the three-ton craft could not sustain its load, for men in the water were soon hanging on to the sides, pulling it under.

Slowly it began to go down. Those near the seats climbed up on to them, keeping their heads above water longer than their less fortunate companions.

Scott-Bowden came to the surface blinded by a sticky mass of oil which penetrated his eyes, ears, mouth and nose. It clogged his hair into a sticky mass. With one wet hand he gouged away some grease, and with the other reached out at a floating chair.

Two men appeared—black, featureless figures. They clung to the officer before he could reach the chair.

All three went down together. Scott-Bowden held what breath was left in his tortured lungs and came up again—without the others.

An upturned lifeboat floated past and he clambered up on its oily bottom, to be joined by twenty or thirty men scrambling for a grip on its sodden, slippery planks. Then suddenly it was gone from under them, just as though some giant phantom hand had snatched it away.

Again the major surfaced, now securing a box for a support. For the first time he chanced to look round. Dead men were hanging in lifebelts, and live men were struggling without them.

Two pet dogs were swimming nearby, their black muzzles thrust out of the water and their eyes rolling white as they swam vainly in small circles.

Another lifeboat appeared, keel upwards. Scott-Bowden scrambled on to it. As it rocked he managed to grab at the keel, and it lifted him out of the sea and threw him over its tortoise-like back. Several more swimmers pulled themselves on to it.

The boat wanted some riding, for there was a strong current running. As she rolled to one side the survivors slid to the other, knowing that for any one of them the first mistake would be the last.

The boat tossed and bucked as though seeking to throw its riders into the oily sea. Steadily it drifted farther out. Scott-Bowden could never have held on had it not been for a handhold on the damaged keel, where a chunk had been knocked out, leaving a rough surface into which he was able to lock his fingers.

Four soldiers, each holding one corner of an inflated mattress were paddling away. On the mattress lay a wounded sergeant-major, staining the rubber with his blood.

The Lancastria was keel upwards and so low in the water that it was obvious she would, at any moment, founder completely. The hulk was swarming with troops, many of whom clung to the propellers and rudder.

Second-Lieutenant Petit slid into the water easily, losing only his cap in the process. He then struck out vigorously, trying to avoid the hundreds of bodies floating in the vicinity.

Fortunately the fuel oil had not completely surrounded the sinking ship. There were lanes of clear water, rapidly narrowing, and he was able to swim clear of the creeping mess.

Close by, men were floundering and dying like flies trapped on a sticky paper, fighting a hell of black oil.

Petit's collar and tie began to shrink and he had to wrench them off, while the contents of his trousers pockets dragged and rubbed, making his skin smart.

When quite a way away from the wreck he was amazed to hear a woman's voice calling for help for her child, but he failed to locate the direction and swam on reluctantly.

"Look after my baby." The voice was getting weaker.

Then came the answer to his silent prayer. "It's all right, ma—we've got her!"

A small group of men, not far off, were carefully holding a small bundle clear of the waves.

Overhead the German planes still machine-gunned. A raft on which a score of dazed men were clinging was riddled with bullets. Everyone was killed.

Then the aircraft began dropping bombs again; incendiaries now, in the hope of setting the oil alight. Each time they released a fresh stick the concussion travelled through the sea, producing sharp pains in men's limbs already beginning to go numb with cold.

As fast as they touched the oily water the incendiaries spluttered and went out, though at least one burned for an uncomfortable length of time, and

NEIGHBOURS—2

Love your neighbour, but do not pull down your own hedge.

George Herbert

everybody who noticed it feared that before long the sea around would become a seething mass of flame. Fortunately the flash-point of the heavy oil was high, and the raiders failed in their endeavour to wipe out every living soul.

When Chief Officer Harry Grattidge saw that there was nothing more to be done he reported to Captain Sharp on the bridge. "Well, sir, I'm going to clear out now and walk into it."

The captain nodded, not speaking, and Grattidge went on deck and stepped from its sloping side into the sea.

The hissing of steam from the sinking ship grew fainter.

"Directly the deck touches the drink we'd better push off," Squadron-leader Shipp had remarked to his friend, Bob Doig. They were just getting ready to go overboard when a young soldier not far away called out: "I can't swim—I can't swim."

Immediately Shipp pulled off his shoes and tunic, fastened his own lifejacket round the youth, shouted to Doig to dive in, then followed, giving the soldier a sharp push to get him into the water as well.

With the private still floundering along behind, the squadron-leader towed him towards a lifeboat.

On reaching the boat they found it to be grossly overcrowded, but the two officers agreed that the best thing would be to get their charge up to the gunwale rope, where he could hang on.

This they did with comparative ease, though by now the strain of half-supporting a frightened non-swimmer was telling, and Shipp was becoming very tired indeed. Nevertheless, they both struck out for themselves, agreeing that they would stand the best chance of success that way, without hindering one another.

Shipp kept on swimming and resting alternately. Always at the back of his mind was a strong belief that sooner or later he would be picked up.

A ship in sight

He swam on back towards the coast and as he turned over to float for a spell he saw ahead of him what appeared to be a small ship of some sort coming in his direction.

At once he began to make for it, thinking that he had been spotted and that it was hurrying to his aid. But it turned away, leaving him desperately weary and getting colder.

A small rowing-boat, manned by two Frenchmen, left from the shore. The rowers headed out among a group of survivors. But the first man to reach for the gunwale was felled by the flat of an oar.

The craft continued on its way, the Frenchmen ignoring the cries and curses as they began retrieving any floating objects—boxes, kit bags and so on—they could find. Then, still fending off drowning, frightened men, they calmly turned their boat and made for land with their haul of loot.

Company Quartermaster-sergeant Edward Johnson had slid down the side of the Lancastria and was soon clinging to a baulk of timber, on the other end of which was an army padre, still wearing his "dog-collar."

The pair hung on, not speaking, and drifted with the tide, until a German plane swept low overhead, machine-guns blazing.

The chaplain ducked, then looked up, cursing quietly at a rear gunner who was easily visible in his turret.

"You bastards!" the padre remarked with considerable feeling.

The human touch

"Thank God you're human, sir," Johnson said.

Sergeant Alfred Garretts climbed to the highest point of the upturned hull, and was soon sitting on the propeller shaft, taking off his boots and waiting to meet the sea as it came ever nearer. He dived in and swam away, removing his battledress but keeping on his shirt.

A couple of destroyers stood fairly close by, and he did his utmost to swim to the nearest one, but the vessel moved off before he could get close enough to attract attention.

An officer in the water nearby was making absolutely no attempt to save himself; he had thoughts only of trying to calm men who had temporarily lost their reason and threatened to attack others in their sudden panic.

A man without any lifejacket swam up to Corporal Macpherson and politely said: "Good afternoon." (Had he worn a hat he would surely have raised it.) "I propose to share your lifebelt—do you mind?"

"Not at all," the R.A.F. man smiled. "Please make yourself comfortable."

Another man swam alongside Sergeant Garretts, holding a steady conversation, as though enjoying a holiday dip. Then, probably getting bored with the monosyllabic replies, he struck out for one of the destroyers, unmoved by the machine-gun fire which continued to rake the surrounding sea.

A ripping pain in one of his legs caused the sergeant to think he had been hit. For a few seconds he kicked out more wildly. As he did so the pain began to disappear and he realized that his muscles had not been torn by a bullet, but were knotted in cramp.

Seized muscles, though, can bring the strongest swimmer to his death; so, with the warning heeded, Garretts began to search even more urgently for some means of escape from this tragic sea, which was fast causing a numbing chill.

© Geoffrey Bond, 1959

NEXT WEEK: Can the rescue ships reach them in time?

"Lancastria," by Geoffrey Bond, is published as a book by Oldbourne Press at 18s.

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MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

Well built, though old, and with no bathroom or hot water. . . . If you have a house like these, you may qualify for a grant from the government to help you to modernize it

First aid for old houses

by ROGER SMITHELLS

NEW house improvement grants, which you can claim as your absolute right through your local council, are the latest development in the campaign for improving ill-equipped houses that were built before 1945. As this money is granted and not loaned, it need not be repaid, subject to certain conditions. For instance, if the house is let after improvement, a ten-year rent control is imposed; also, the house must not be sold for three years unless to someone in your own family.

There are still old houses which lack baths or showers, wash handbasins, hot-water systems, adequate food stores and water closets. If you live in a house or flat built before 1945 which lacks all or any of the above facilities, these grants may interest you. Details are contained in a booklet *Improve Your House With A Grant*, copies of which can be had from local authorities.

There are two kinds of grant, the standard grant and the discretionary grant. The standard grant is your right, and allows you to install the five improvements I have already mentioned. The maximum amount of money granted this way is £155. If your house lacks only one or two of these facilities, then a smaller grant may be obtained.

To obtain a standard grant you must either own the house or flat, or hold a lease which has at least fifteen years still to run. If you own a tenanted house or flat, the tenants' written agreement to the improvements must be obtained before work begins. The improved dwelling must be reasonably fit to live in for at least another fifteen years, and must be kept as a dwelling for this period. It should also have been built before 1945 or be the result of a conversion from some other building built before 1945 and converted before the end of 1958. Your local council should approve your application.

An application form for the standard grant may be obtained from your council and should be submitted to them when the details are filled in. Although they cannot refuse your grant if the circumstances are correct, work must not be begun until their written approval has been obtained. Failure to obtain the approval will disqualify you from receiving the grant.

If you wish to be free of the conditions, if you wished to sell the house, for instance, repayment of the appropriate proportion of the grant to the council releases you.

The discretionary grant is to help owners to modernize their homes to a further extent than is covered by the standard grant, or to convert a large house into flats. To qualify for this you must propose spending at least £100 on each house or flat.

Council's discretion

Half the estimated cost of modernizing is allowed, subject to a maximum of £400 per house. If kept within the maximum figure, the cost of professional fees may also be included.

As the name implies, this type of grant is only given at the discretion of the local council and subject to certain conditions. The council must feel satisfied that the house will have a useful life of thirty years after improvements.

Repair work is not covered by this grant but it is possible to borrow money from the council for this purpose, or to meet the rest of the cost for improvements.

continued from page 10

hour. Later the two young airmen, both very fit, drew ahead.

At 1.30 they arrived at the summit —and found that they had been climbing the wrong peak. Half a mile away was a second summit with a flat, circular top. It was there that the Tudor had crashed. Between the two peaks was a valley 1,500 feet down.

Robertson began shouting curses into space; then he saw three tiny figures below, moving slowly across the valley towards him.

They proved to be Sergeant Emmerson and the two corporals, looking tired, ill and badly sunburned. Emmerson explained that he had pitched a second camp eight hundred feet below the farther summit and left Costall, the airman, to guard it. Now he was returning for supplies.

They agreed to meet later at the second camp, and Robertson's party carried on. They found Costall, looking sunburned but cheerful, at 2.30. Emmerson joined them at four, very tired, and alone. He had sent the corporals back to Nurskincik to recuperate.

Robertson gestured towards the two tents. "We can't sleep six," he said. "They've dropped some more on the top. I've had it for today. Who's fit?"

Murphy grinned. "You're in a pretty grovelling state, aren't you," he said. "Come on, Derek, let's move." At this height the slope was very steep, but the two young airmen made good progress. They reached the top but found no canisters, and started to descend. Halfway down a snow cloud closed over them, causing a total white-out.

Howling wolves

They lay in the snow, waiting for it to pass. At 6 p.m. they arrived back in the camp exhausted.

They found the others in poor shape, vomiting often and with severe headaches. Wolves were howling outside, but it was impossible to say how close they were. The men were still unarmed. All the radio valves had blown, so no messages could be sent. They squeezed three in a tent and tried to sleep.

Meanwhile, Parrott had received a confidential letter from H.Q. giving details of the secret cargo. "I wish I could tell you what I've just read," he told the other officers at Diyarbakir. "It made my ears crawl over the top of my head."

The letter made it quite clear that some of Britain's top defence secrets now lay exposed to view on top of the mountain. The wrecked cargo had to be obliterated—at virtually any cost.

Parrott was now in a critical dilemma. He was out of touch with Robertson; he knew that Robertson wasn't equipped for demolition work, and doubted whether he would be able to destroy the cargo without explosives. Should he send Ellery, who was a rocket expert but had no climbing experience and might not get up the mountain? He decided to risk it.

When Ellery arrived at Nurskincik, Parrott, who was flying overhead at the time, spoke to him by radio. Ellery said that he would be on the mountain-top in two days' time. Parrott agreed to drop explosives to him then.

But Ellery needed an experienced guide, and Flight Sergeant Appleby, who had been left in charge of the base, was the logical choice. Appleby had

continued on page 30

How do you choose a suit?

A GOOD SUIT MUST BE HAND-CUT ON A CRAFTSMAN'S BENCH. Above, a typical Hepworth cutter at work

THE CLOTH MUST BE RIGHT FOR ITS PURPOSE. Here samples are being examined in one of the Hepworth stockrooms

THE STYLE IS A PERSONAL MATTER but Hepworth managers are always ready to advise

- **Do you specify the style?**
- **Do you snap the cloth critically between finger and thumb?**
- **Or do you have blind faith in your tailor?**

PETER DENE investigates...

"STAND away, there!" called the guard and the slamming of doors ceased as the train began to move.

It began to gather speed and the jolting made reading the morning paper difficult, so I studied my fellow passengers instead—mostly men. There they sat in a row, completely varied in personality, ridiculously alike in dress.

How do they all choose their suit, I wondered. Do they just walk into a shop and try one on. Do they decide in advance if the lapels are to be cut with high notches, or the pockets on the slant. Or do they simply trust their tailor?

A man's suit is a remarkably conventional piece of clothing—as the ladies never tire of pointing out. When it's brand new, one is very like another. It's only in wear that the difference really becomes apparent.

How do you know a good suit when you see one—or rather, in the case of a tailored suit, *before* you see it? I started asking questions and began logically enough, in Savile Row.

"What distinguishes a good suit?" I queried a leading West End tailor. "Cut and cloth," he replied. "If a suit is hand-cut by a craftsman, then this quality will show in the easy comfortable fit and the way the suit hangs, no matter how much it is worn." "And what about the cloth," I said. "How can an average chap judge that?" "He can't," replied the Savile Row expert. "He's simply got to trust his tailor."

Window Dressing

That didn't seem to get me very far, so I started again—this time in Oxford Street. Here, at least, I could see the finished product . . . in practically every other shop window. Suits of every style, colour and material—rows and rows of them—all magnificently perfect, all impeccable.

That was the trouble. Why didn't my suit ever look like that? And I began to look closer for the reason. These garments were practically sewn on to the models. Waists were perfectly shaped. Jackets stretched smoothly over artificial chests. Lapels were ironed out to perfection. The sheer smoothness of the pockets would have been spoilt by even a handkerchief, let alone the junk I manage to accumulate.

This was window dressing par excellence . . . and I began to see what Savile Row meant about trusting your tailor.

Then I stopped at a window that was different. Just as attractive as the others—in fact, to my mind, more so—yet all the suits had a naturalness about them. I noticed that most of the jackets were unbuttoned, to show that they hung that way naturally. These suits, I thought, are made to be worn.

My eye travelled up to the facia and I read the name of a popular tailor whose advertisements make a great feature of hand-cutting. Hand-cutting! The phrase was familiar—that's what the Savile Row man spoke about. Now we were getting somewhere. I went inside.

Hand Cut Essential

Mr. Johns, the Manager of the West End branch of Hepworths Limited, came forward to greet me. His tall distinguished appearance reminded me very much of the suits in the window. "What makes a good suit?" I asked him—and almost laughed when I heard him echo the earlier reply . . . "Well, I should say basically cut and cloth."

"And do you really cut all your made-to-measure suits individually by hand?" I queried. "We certainly do," he replied. "Every single one. It's the very basis of first-class tailoring, the only possible way to begin. After all, unless they're twins, no two customers are ever identical."

Well, that was point number one. The suit must be hand-cut. But what about choosing the cloth. Wasn't there some yardstick the average man could use—some reasonable compromise between technical knowledge and blind faith.

"Well, yes—and no," said Mr. Johns. "You can see that the cloth you pick is a good weight for instance. You can tell something from the feel. A soft cloth will crease more easily. A hard worsted will hold its shape under wear. A loose weave won't do for trousers if you do too much sitting down. And, of course, most important of all, you must study the composition of the cloth. Is it pure wool or is it blended?"

"How do I know these things?" I said. "They're indicated on every Hepworth pattern," was the answer. "Our customers know exactly what they are buying."

I told him what the Savile Row man had said about trusting your tailor. "Yes, indeed, that's very true," said Mr. Johns. "And mark you, it doesn't follow that the highest price means the best cloth. Not by a long, long way. This is a field in which Hepworths are paramount. Look, I'll show you."

He reached for a roll of cloth off the shelf—a smart charcoal grey worsted—and unrolled it over his arm.

A Remarkable Test

"This cloth," he said, "is pure wool. It is a good weight. It handles and drapes well and is a close weave. A Hepworth hand-cut suit from this cloth costs fifteen guineas. Recently we checked it against cloths from three suits, bought in London at 16 gns, 23 gns and 30 gns. The thirty guinea one was a beautiful cloth—soft, smooth, plenty of bulk, and with a lovely feel to it. The other two were practically indistinguishable from ours in weight or handle.

Then we had them tested for wear by an independent textile testing house in Bradford. The machine they use there revolves one piece of the material against another at a given pressure and records the number of 'rubs' it takes to wear through. First we tested the thirty guinea suit, and after 17,000 rubs the cloth began to go. The sixteen guinea suit went next at 18,500. The twenty-three guinea material lasted for 25,000 rubs, and the Hepworth cloth you see here started to wear thin only after 29,500 rubs."

This seemed extraordinary to me. How could a cloth which seemed so much better be used for a suit costing so much less? "You must remember," said Mr. Johns. "That our cloths are such extraordinary value for one reason only." And he explained.

Most tailors buy from merchants, who in turn buy from the mills, sometimes even through a second wholesaler—with a profit margin at every stage. Hepworths order direct from the mills, and in many cases dictate exactly the style of cloth they wish woven and the price they are prepared to pay. This fact alone, according to Hepworths, can save up to £10 on the price of a good suit. "I can honestly say," said Mr. Johns, "that a Hepworth cloth is the finest value in the world."

This was a bit of an eye-opener! Cut . . . cloth . . . but what about style? I had visions of the men sitting opposite me in the railway carriage, all as near as dammit identical.

"Suppose I don't like your styles," I objected. "I don't like blocked shoulders, for one thing, and I don't like the way most popular tailors cut the trousers, with too much fullness in the seat."

Hepworths, I was told, individually tailor your clothes for you exactly the way you want them. "As I said before," Mr. Johns went on. "No two people are ever alike—either in their figures or in their preferences. I prefer natural shoulders myself—feel, there's no padding there." I felt.

"I had a new customer in only the other week who, because of his height and slimness, wanted his lapels cut to a special design. He sketched them on the back of an envelope, and our cutter followed the sketch exactly. Incidentally, he's in Fleet Street, like yourself. You might even know him!" But he didn't mention his name. It wouldn't have been etiquette.

I had no more questions left.

If all Hepworth managers are like this one, then this enterprising firm must be doing some remarkably good business. Good luck to them. They certainly convinced me.

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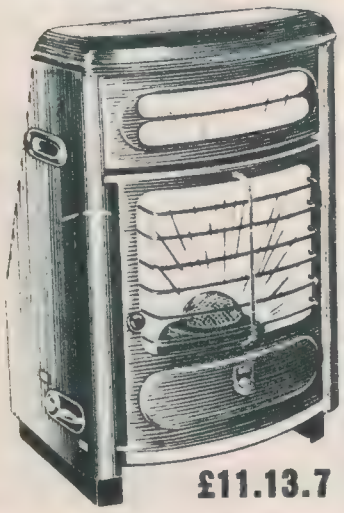

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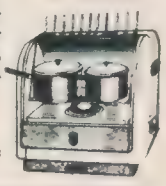

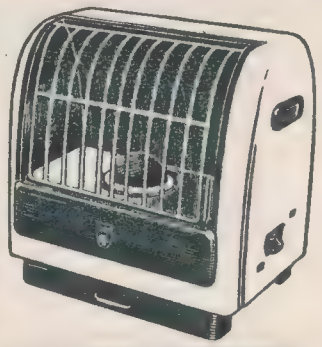

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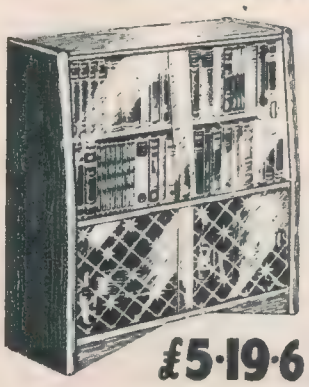

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continued from page 28

been told by Robertson not to leave the base, but it was agreed that he should disobey orders and go. With Ellery and the two corporals, who were fit again, he planned to leave for the top next day by helicopter.

Next morning, May 3, brought better weather. Robertson and the other five men camped near the summit woke early. Emmerson was seriously sick and Bishop had a poisoned toe; neither was fit to climb. At seven Robertson left to find the crashed plane with Ellis, Murphy and Costall.

They arrived on top just before nine. Bears had left many imprints in the snow. A propeller jutting from the snow was the first they saw of the crashed Tudor. The rest of the wreckage covered an area a mile wide by half a mile long, and bodies were scattered as widely. The doctor said that all the men had died at the moment of the crash—ten days before.

Some of the footprints around the wreckage were human, and Robertson concluded that hill-dwelling natives had been there first. The climbers retrieved some documents then tried to smash the equipment with axes.

Robertson's axe soon broke. He had his camera, and began taking pictures. They tore out the plane's instruments to help the experts trace the cause of the crash. The exertion left them painfully short-winded. Later, they tried to bury the bodies where they lay, covering them with snow.

"We'll have to hold some sort of a service," said Robertson, when they had finished. "Can anyone say a prayer?" They walked in embarrassed silence to the centre of the wreck-strewn area and formed an inward-facing square. For a while nobody spoke; they were all conscious of a Turkish plane circling overhead. Finally Murphy, a Roman Catholic, began to speak: "O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy departed servants the remission of all their sins. . . ." Quietly he repeated the *De Profundis*—the Catholic prayer for the dead.

By noon they were back at Camp Two. Emmerson still looked ill, but he refused to discuss it. Ellis's lips had swollen so badly from sunburn that they gave him the name of Sambo.

At 2 p.m. they started down. Emmerson led, but sickness compelled him to give way to Murphy. Once Murphy was half-buried in soft snow, and Emmerson warned that conditions were right for an avalanche. On one steep slope they all slid for seven hundred feet on their trouser seats. At ten thousand feet they saw Nurskincik, and the helicopter parked by the schoolhouse. Robertson fired two flares and the helicopter took off and flew them down to the village.

It was then that Robertson learned that Ellery had left, with Appleby, for the summit. He was furious. "Ellery won't make it," he said. "I'm damned sure he won't make it." Before going to sleep, he asked Murphy if he felt fit enough to lead a five-man party back up the next day to dynamite the wreckage. Murphy nodded.

Robertson's fears about Ellery were justified. After the first hour or two he had begun to find the going very hard. Appleby stayed with him while the other two went on, but Ellery looked tired and ill, and Appleby realized that there was no chance of reaching the top with him. In the afternoon both pairs gave up the attempt.

Early next morning, Parrott flew over Nurskincik and dropped supplies, arms and two letters for Robertson. One pressed the need for destroying the secret equipment; the other was an income-tax demand.

By radio Parrott asked him what conditions were like near the crash. "Bloody awful," was Robertson's reply.

He mentioned his fears about Ellery and said that he proposed sending Murphy with a second demolition squad. Parrott agreed, and promised to drop an explosives kit on the peak.

Soon afterwards, Murphy left with his squad. He took Robertson's camera to record the demolition work. Freak winds helped the helicopter carry them to twelve thousand feet. On top, they found four tents in canisters and bedded down for the night.

At 6.30 next morning Parrott dropped the explosives on the mountain-top while snow clouds closed in quickly. Murphy and his men were waiting. They took out the charges, which looked like chocolate bars, and read the instructions. Murphy asked one man to help him and sent the others to a safe distance. Then he placed a trial charge inside a crack in a rock, lit the fuse and ran for cover. Nothing happened. Forty-five minutes later Murphy went cautiously back. His companion snatched the fuse out and found that it had failed to burn.

Race for cover

They prepared the next charge more carefully, placed it under part of the wreckage, touched it off and again ran for cover. As they waited, Murphy pointed towards the charge. "Isn't that the boss's camera on top?" he asked. "Hell, yes," said his companion as the explosion roared out.

By 2 p.m. they had set off about thirty sticks, and both were near collapse from exhaustion. The whole cargo had been smashed to fragments.

By now it was snowing heavily and Murphy decided against going down the mountain that night. Next morning conditions were still bad, but they decided to start down by way of camps one and two. As they progressed, the weather rapidly deteriorated.

Then, quite suddenly, the snowstorm eased. Coming over a ridge they caught sight of Nurskincik and everyone started to laugh and sing. Murphy fired red distress flares—the only signals he had. There were immediate answering greens from below. Then the helicopter arrived and took them down.

Robertson was waiting. "My camera, George?" were his first words.

"We blew it up," said Murphy.

"Let's keep the jokes for later," suggested Robertson.

Murphy shrugged. "I'm not joking. It got blown up. I'm sorry."

Robertson started to swear, then stopped. "You chaps need some sleep," he said. "We'll de-brief and have a drink in an hour or two."

At dusk a nip of whisky was issued all round. Robertson looked round his bearded, dirty and skinning climbers. "Well, we're all here," he said, "and we've done the job. And if you ask me we've been bloody lucky."

Five thousand feet above them, snow was already covering the shattered fragments of the Super Trader's top-secret cargo. THE END

NEIGHBOURS—3

The love of humanity as such is mitigated by violent dislike of the next-door neighbour.

A. N. Whitehead

THUMBTHING by Stowell

Poet in the Garden

Bulbs in the garden should be planted now.
See they are set in deep, five inches down
For daffodils and hyacinth; let the crown
Come uppermost and level, and they'll grow
Healthy and straight. Lay them on silver sand.
Don't use manure; bone-meal worked in the soil
Is all they need. The smaller bulbs, you'll find,
Should go three inches deep. And mark each hole,
Or you may root 'em up when blithely hoeing.
When forcing indoor bulbs, soak fibre well,
See bulbs are deep enough, just their tops showing.
Plunge them in ashes, pots, bulbs, peat and all,
Let them be six good inches deep, then stay
Six weeks at least before they see the day.
Then for a week, set them inside a frame
With shaded lights, then greenhouse, or your home.
And if you find them mildewed, charcoal cures.
And water carefully, keep it off the flowers.

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH

Terror in the town

continued from page 12

where she went. A girl with her beauty would not be overlooked by boys old enough to be thinking of girls, and some of El Gato's crowd, like El Gato himself, were older than their years.

But when Teresa asked to walk in the plaza with Ricardo Rosas of an evening, to talk about becoming a teacher, could I insult such a fine young man by withholding permission?

But The Cat, too, was aware of the teacher's interest in my Teresa, and, when the opportunity came, he was waiting.

It came in school, when they were discussing the career of Consuela Ordonez, who fought at the side of General Huerta in our revolution. "A brave woman," Ricardo Rosas said, "but cruel. As you know, she was the general's mistress, and because of her influence on him. . . ."

El Gato had limply lifted a hand. "What is a mistress, maestro?"

"A woman who lives. . . ." The teacher caught himself. "I think you know the answer to that, Lico. As I was saying, because of this——"

"Is she perhaps a woman not married to the man with whom——"

"That will be enough, Lico!"

"Like you and Teresa Artega?"

El Gato's cronies rocked the room with laughter, but the students not under El Gato's control were shocked by the boldness of this affront. My son, Juan, thirteen years old, sprang to his feet and whirled, shaking with rage, to hurl himself upon Morales. The teacher reached my son in three strides and held him. "Sit down!" he ordered.

The room was deathly quiet as he pressed Juan back on to his chair. Then, hands clenched at his sides, and face as white as the chalk lines on the blackboard, Rosas faced the class.

"The mid-term examination papers arrived yesterday from the Secretaria de Educacion Publica," he said grimly. "We will take them now, and there will be no talking while they are in progress. One word will be evidence of cheating."

Thin-lipped with anger, he sorted the examination papers and passed them out, the more difficult papers going of course, to the older boys, who looked at one another in dismay—all but El Gato, who smirked in triumph. There was much twisting and squirming, but no talk. To fail the examinations sent out by the Secretaria was a serious matter.

When they arrived home, Juan and Jose told me what had happened. In a rage, I went to the teacher's room. "What is to be done?" I demanded.

He had been looking at the test papers. Rising, he placed a hand on my shoulder. "I should like to call on Lico's parents this evening. I want you to come with me—for the sake of the school, Felipe."

My only concern at the moment was to obtain satisfaction for El Gato's insult to my family. But he was a hard man to refuse, this Ricardo. . . .

We avoided the plaza. It was only later that I learned how El Gato and his gang paraded through the cafés that evening, making remarks.

By dark streets we made our way to the little tile shop of Bartolome Morales. Bartolome himself, a small, grey-haired man with a thousand worries pulling at his face, admitted us. His wife came forward to be introduced, and returned at once to her chair, obviously frightened.

The teacher studied El Gato's father. "I have a question," he said. "Why does your son come to school when he so obviously hates to?"

Bartolome emitted a harsh sound and said: "It is no mystery, señor. He

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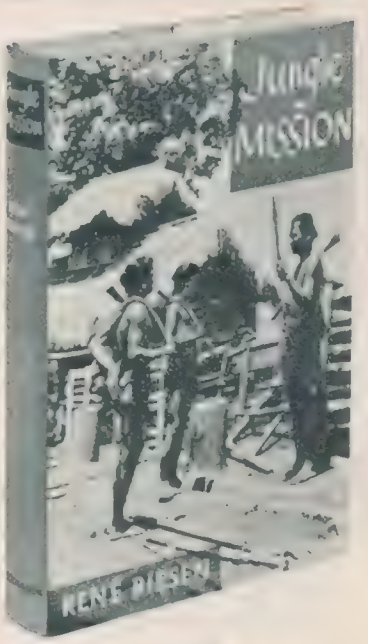

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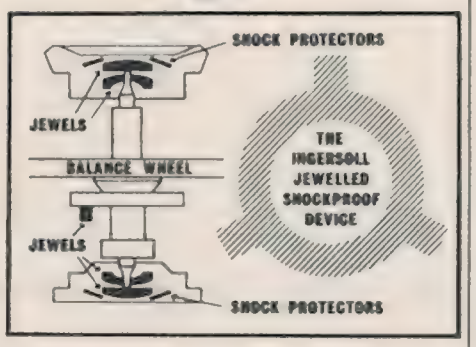

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continued from previous page

attends school because his uncle insists on it."

The teacher started. "Martin Morales, you mean? The bandit?"

"The same."

"But why?"

"Because, señor," Bartolome shrugged, "Martin would not be a hunted man today if he had acquired an education. He is no outlaw by choice; only through mistakes of political judgment that a better informed man might not have made. When Lico begs to be allowed to join him, my brother tells him: 'Study! Finish your schooling and get good marks. Then we will discuss it!' "

The teacher thought for a moment, then nodded. "Meanwhile, the boy imagines himself a bandit already, eh?"

"Si, señor. Shaming us before our friends, breaking his mother's heart...." Bartolome's thin hands made motions of helplessness.

We talked awhile about Bartolome's troubles; then the teacher said: "Do you know where to find your brother, Bartolome? Can you send a message?"

The father of El Gato hesitated. "There might be a way."

The teacher stood up. "I regret what I must say to you now, Bartolome. I say it in sadness, believe me. It is my duty to inform you that your son failed his Secretaria examinations today. As a consequence, he will almost certainly have to repeat the year's work."

Bartolome slowly rose to his feet, his eyes wide with apprehension. "Failed?" he whispered. "Failed?"

We left the unfortunate man standing there as though he had been told the world would end.

On the way home I said, not without a small sneer: "So your prize pupil is not so bright, after all!"

"He did not fail, Felipe."

"But you told his father. . . ."

"The boy had the highest mark in his class," the teacher said softly.

"But why? Why . . . ?"

"I gathered from what Bartolome said that we have an ally we have not used yet," he said with a smile. "I thought it was time we used him."

OUR young teacher felt the strain of the days that followed. Bartolome Morales evidently hadn't the courage to speak to his son about the examinations, and El Gato overlooked no opportunity to widen the chink he had discovered in the teacher's armour. The teacher's self-control was remarkable.

At home he seemed tired and had little to say. He did not walk in the plaza with Teresa any more. They talked in our little patio garden, where no one could mock them.

Saturday evening came. There was no evidence that Bartolome had spoken to El Gato's bandit uncle. The teacher said to me, with a sad shake of his head: "It hasn't worked, Felipe. I'm going out to drink a beer. Come with me?"

We walked down the hill together to Zurieta's little café and sat at a table. It was a warm evening. The plaza was crowded with people promenading.

We sat for an hour or so, not talking much. Then suddenly there was a silencing of voices in the square; people stopped strolling. I rose from my chair to see what was happening, and heard a name whispered from tongue to tongue like a breath of wind.

Then I saw him. He had come into the plaza on the opposite side, from the direction of Bartolome's house. With him were three of his followers, dressed like himself in coloured shirts and black trousers. El Gato slouched beside him, trying to imitate the big man's contemptuous way of walking, and on the heels of this select little group trailed El Gato's hooligans.

HALTING at our table, his ominously smiling nephew beside him, the bandit said: "This is the man, Lico?"

"Allow me to introduce you," El Gato said. "Señor Rosas, my uncle, Martin Morales!"

The teacher rose to his feet, but was no such fool as to offer his hand. He nodded. "You wish to see me, Señor Morales?"

"I wish to see you," Morales purred.

"I appreciate your coming." The teacher drew back a chair for him.

Morales ignored the chair. "I am told you have failed my nephew in his examinations," he said, his gaze never leaving the teacher's face. "I am told you did this to punish him."

The teacher said: "If your nephew says he passed the examinations, señor, he is right." I saw him wipe his hands on his trousers to dry them. His face was pale. "He is, however, a failure as a citizen," he continued. "Therefore I felt justified. . . ."

El Gato muttered something and lurched forward, but Morales stopped him. "Continue," Morales said.

"Lico defies his parents," the teacher said, wiping his hands again. "He defies the authorities. He defies me in school. He regards this behaviour as proof of bravery, but as I told him once before, he is brave only because he has surrounded himself with a gang who will do his fighting for him." The teacher folded his arms. "In this, I suspect, he patterns himself on you."

Morales drew in a breath that made him larger, though he was the largest man in the plaza to begin with. "I need no gang to fight for me!"

"Then why have you brought one? And why have you come with a gun at your belt." The teacher was actually smiling, though it was not much of a smile. "I have no gun, señor," he said, "nor do I have a gang. Only these." He held out his hands. "But of course, that is not the way you would settle a dispute, eh?"

A strange sound arose from the crowd at these bold words: a sound such as bees make when they are excited. Martin Morales looked about him when he heard it, his lips tight.

Then abruptly his pent-up breath exploded in a gust of laughter, and he stripped the gun belt from his waist and tossed it to one of his men. "So you think I need a gang!" he bellowed.

The teacher wet his lips with his tongue and wiped his hands on his trousers for the third time. "Have I any assurance that these men won't come to your assistance if you do need them?" he demanded. "Or that Lico and his hoodlums won't interfere?"

MORALES placed his hands on his hips and faced the crowd. "Listen to me!" he shouted, fiercely grinning. "If one of you so much as moves a finger to scratch at a flea, I will burn Pescadero to the ground! Stand back!" He faced the teacher. "Come, little *professor*," he crooned, showing his teeth. "Let us find out who needs help."

He sprang forward. The teacher slid sideways under an outstretched arm and planted his knuckles on Morales's jaw. The battle had begun. . . .

I would need more words than I know to tell about that fight, for it lasted half

an hour and was the strangest thing ever seen in Pescadero.

Never before had we seen a man use his fists as this young teacher did. He slipped under and around the big man's rushes as deftly as a matador in the bull ring. He stung Morales's face and body with blow after blow.

Up and down the plaza they fought, Morales always on the attack, while the teacher defended himself by dodging, weaving and stabbing.

Twenty minutes went by. More than that. The teacher now seemed reluctant to use his hands at all, and I wondered if he had hurt them. He waited longer before gliding out of harm's way, and seemed to stagger and have trouble breathing.

ALL at once he stumbled against a table, his retreat cut off. The crowd groaned. Morales roared and charged. But the teacher stepped forward with the speed of light, slapped Morales's outflung arm aside and drove a fist like a battering ram to the big man's jaw. At once he stepped back, again, his face twisted with pain, an easy victim. But Morales went reeling into the gutter and lay there.

No one moved. The crowd looked at the teacher and gasped. The three bandits gazed unbelievingly at their fallen leader. El Gato and his gang seemed turned to stone.

The teacher said to me: "We'd better go home and send for a doctor, Felipe. I've broken my hand. I thought I would when I hit him hard enough to stop him."

The next day was Sunday, and the whole town buzzed with the story of the battle. On Monday, in school, El Gato and his cronies were strangely well behaved. On Tuesday the teacher returned the examination papers and congratulated El Gato on having scored the highest marks in his class; and according to my sons. El Gato thanked him.

That evening a strange thing happened. I was sitting at a table in front of Zurieta's café—the same table—and Chamorro and Quintanilla came across the plaza to join me. We amused ourselves for a time watching my daughter, Teresa, and the teacher, strolling hand in hand.

"That was a brave thing Martin Morales did," Chamorro said suddenly. "We have much to thank him for."

I thought I had not heard correctly. "Brave?" I said, frowning.

He seemed surprised. "Haven't you been told? You must be the last to hear it, then. Morales did not really lose the fight. He let himself lose."

"A fine gesture," Quintanilla agreed. "Of course, it detracts nothing from the teacher's remarkable performance. Ricardo fought with great courage."

"Morales let himself be beaten?" I snorted. "Are you crazy, both of you?"

"Not at all," Chamorro insisted. "The teacher himself says so. Morales could have whipped him, but preferred to demonstrate to his nephew that books and learning are of more value than the life of an outlaw. Ask the teacher."

I THOUGHT they were mad, but when I caught the teacher by his arm, repeating what they had said, he nodded.

"But you can't tell such a story!" I protested. "It isn't true!"

"Felipe, listen to me," Ricardo Rosas said, in the tone I use sometimes when my sons need instructing. "A man who has been whipped is usually resentful. He looks for a chance to get even. You know that. On the other hand, a man who has won the reputation of doing something noble—unexpected though the reputation may be to him—that man will hardly jeopardize his new nobility by a foolish act. Nor are those who admire him likely to jeopardize it for him."

He laid a hand on my shoulder—the bandaged hand, because Teresa clung to the other.

"Let Morales have the glory," he said. "It may make him a better man. All I want is to stay on here as teacher with El Gato on my side. Until"—he smiled at my daughter—"well, for a little while longer." THE END

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Cat among the pigeons

continued from page 8

it in a soft whistle. "Good lord. Are they *real*?"

Ali looked amused. "Of course they are real. Most of them belonged to my father. They have come from many places, bought for our family by men we can trust—from London, from Calcutta, from South Africa. It is a tradition of our family, to have these in case of need." He added in a matter-of-fact voice: "They are worth, at today's prices, about three-quarters of a million pounds—and I would not trust anyone with them except you."

"Me?" Bob stared.

"Yes. I do not want these stones to fall into the hands of my enemies. I do not know when the rising against me will take place. It may be planned for today. I may not live to reach the airfield this afternoon. Take the stones and arrange to get them to Europe."

"But look here, Ali, I haven't the first idea how to do it."

Ali leaned back in his chair. "Do not look so worried, Bob. Do the best you can. All will go as Allah wills."

As Bob Rawlinson walked along the echoing marble corridors of the palace, he had never felt so unhappy in his life. The sentries outside presented arms. Bob walked down the crowded main street, his mind still dazed.

He turned into a native café and ordered lemon tea. As he sipped it, he began, slowly, to come to. The atmosphere of the café was soothing. It was a good place to sit and think.

What the hell was he going to do with those damned stones?

He thought of the embassy. No, he couldn't involve the embassy. And anyway, the embassy would almost certainly refuse to be involved.

What he needed was some person, some perfectly ordinary person, who was leaving the country in some perfectly ordinary way. Someone whose baggage would, at most, be subjected to a superficial search.

There was, of course, the other end to be considered. . . . *Sensation at London Airport. Attempt to smuggle in jewels worth three-quarters of a million.* And so on and so on. But he would have to risk that.

Somebody ordinary—a bona fide traveller. And suddenly Bob kicked himself for a fool. Joan, of course! His sister, Joan Sutcliffe. Joan had been out here for two months with her daughter Jennifer. They were going back by "long sea" in four or five days.

Joan was the ideal person—except that she would talk. She had never been able to keep a thing to herself. So—she mustn't know what she was taking. It would be safer for her that way. He'd make the stones up into a parcel, an innocent-looking parcel. Tell her some story.

Bon glanced at his watch and rose to his feet. He strode along the street, oblivious of the midday heat. He turned into Rafat's leading hotel. It was modestly called the Ritz Savoy.

The clerk behind the desk knew Bob well and beamed at him.

"Good morning, Squadron Leader. You want your sister? She has gone for a picnic with the little girl—to the Kalat Diwa dam."

Bob swore under his breath. "I'll go up to her room," he said, and held out his hand for the key, which the clerk gave him.

He unlocked the door and went in. The room was in its usual confusion. Joan Sutcliffe was not a tidy woman. Golf clubs lay across a chair, tennis rackets had been flung on the bed.

Bob looked round him, at the suitcases and the zip bags. He was faced with a problem. He wouldn't be able to see Joan before flying Ali out. There wasn't time to get to the dam and back.

He could parcel up the stuff and leave it with a note—but he knew that he had probably been followed. There was nothing suspicious in his coming to the hotel to see his sister—but if he left a parcel and a note, the note would be read and the parcel opened.

He looked round the room again. . . . Then, with a grin, he fished out from his pocket the little tool kit he always carried. His niece Jennifer had some plasticine, he noted. That would be a help.

He worked quickly and skilfully. Once he looked up, suspicious, his eyes going to the open window. No, there was no balcony outside this room. It was just his nerves that had made him feel that someone was watching him.

He finished his task and nodded in approval. Nobody would notice what he had done—he felt sure of that. Neither Joan nor anyone else. Certainly not Jennifer, a self-centred child who never saw or noticed anything outside herself.

He swept up all evidences of his toil and put them into his pocket. . . . Then he drew Joan's writing pad towards him and sat frowning. He must leave a note for her—an ordinary everyday note; and then leave a message with someone else to be given to Joan in England. He wrote—

Dear Joan,

Dropped in to ask if you'd care to play a round of golf this evening—but if you've been up to the dam, you'll probably be dead to the world. What about tomorrow?

Yours, Bob.

Then he crossed to the telephone and gave the number of the British Embassy. Presently he was connected with Edmundson, the third secretary.

"John? Bob Rawlinson here. Can you meet me somewhere when you get off? . . . Make it a bit earlier than that? . . . You've got to, old boy. It's important. Well, actually, it's a girl. . . ." He gave an embarrassed cough. "She's wonderful, quite wonderful. Out of this world. Only it's a bit tricky."

Edmundson's voice, sounding slightly stuffed shirt and disapproving, said: "Really, Bob, you and your girls. All right, two o'clock," and rang off.

Bob heard the little echoing click as whoever had been listening in replaced the receiver. Good old Edmundson. Since all telephones in Rafat were tapped, Bob and John Edmundson had worked out a little code of their own. A wonderful girl who was "out of this world" meant something urgent and important.

Edmundson would pick him up in his car outside the new Merchants' Bank at two o'clock and he'd tell Edmundson of the hiding place. He'd tell him that Joan didn't know about it, but that, if anything happened to him, it was important. Going by the long sea route, Joan and Jennifer wouldn't be back in England for six weeks. By that time the revolution would almost certainly have happened and either been successful or have been put down. Ali Yusuf might be in Europe, or he and Bob might both be dead. He would tell Edmundson enough, but not too much.

Bob took a last look round the room, propped his harmless note to Joan on the table and went out. There was no one in the long corridor. . . .

The woman in the room next to that occupied by Joan Sutcliffe stepped back from the balcony. There was a mirror in her hand.

She had gone out on the balcony originally to examine more closely a single hair that had the audacity to spring up on her chin. She dealt with it with tweezers, then subjected her face to a minute scrutiny.

It was then, as she relaxed, that she saw something else. The angle at which she was holding her mirror was such that it reflected the mirror of the hanging wardrobe in the room next to hers, and in that mirror she saw a man doing something very curious . . . she stood there motionless, watching.

The man could not see her from where he sat at the table, and she could only see him by means of the double reflection. If he had turned his head behind him, he might have caught sight of her mirror in the wardrobe mirror, but he was too absorbed in what he was doing to look behind him. Once, it was true, he did look up suddenly towards the window but, since there was nothing to see there, he lowered his head again.

The woman watched him while he finished what he was doing. After a moment's pause he wrote a note, which he propped up on the table. Then he moved out of her line of vision, but she could just hear enough to realize that he was making a telephone call. She couldn't quite catch what was said. Then she heard the door close.

The woman waited a few minutes. Then she opened her door and slipped quickly to the door of the next room. It was locked, but she had expected that. A hairpin and the blade of a small knife did the job expertly.

She went in, pushing the door to behind her. She picked up the note. The flap had only been stuck down lightly and opened easily. There was no explanation there.

She sealed it up, put it back, and walked across the room.

There, with her hand outstretched, she was disturbed by voices through the window from the terrace below. One was a voice that she knew, that of the occupier of the room in which she was standing.

She darted to the window. Below on the terrace, Joan Sutcliffe, accompanied by her daughter Jennifer, a pale, solid child of fifteen, was telling the world and a tall, unhappy-looking Englishman from the British Consulate just what she thought of the arrangements he had come to make.

"But it's absurd. I never *heard* such nonsense.

"I think it's all a lot of panicky fuss. And we've a lot of baggage, you know. I decline to alter all my arrangements in this silly hurry."

Encouragingly, the unhappy-looking man said that Mrs. Sutcliffe and her daughter could be flown, not to England, but to Aden and catch their boat there.

"With our baggage?"

"Yes, yes, that can be arranged. I've got a station wagon waiting. We can load everything right away."

"Oh, well." Mrs. Sutcliffe capitulated. "I suppose we'd better pack."

"At once, if you don't mind."

The woman in the bedroom drew back hurriedly. She took a quick glance at the address on a luggage label on one of the suitcases. Then she slipped quickly out of the room and back into her own just as Mrs. Sutcliffe turned the corner of the corridor.

The clerk from the office was running after her.

"Your brother, the squadron leader, has been here, Mrs. Sutcliffe. He went up to your room. But I think that he has left again."

"How tiresome," said Mrs. Sutcliffe. "Thank you," she said to the clerk and went on to Jennifer: "I suppose Bob's fussing too. I can't see any sign of disturbance *myself* in the streets. This door's unlocked. How careless these people are. Oh, there's a note." She tore it open. "At any rate *Bob* isn't fussing," she said triumphantly. "He obviously doesn't know a thing about all this. Come on, Jennifer, we must just shove everything in anyhow. We can repack later."

"I've never been in a revolution," said Jennifer thoughtfully.

"I don't expect you'll be in one this time," said her mother sharply. "It

Everybody's Puzzling

QUIZZLE

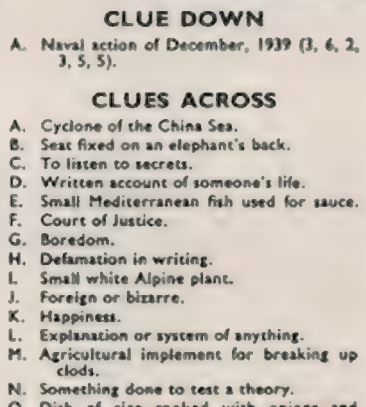
The letters in numbered squares, if placed in the small grid to the left of the puzzle in numerical sequence, will spell a well-known quotation and help to check your solutions.

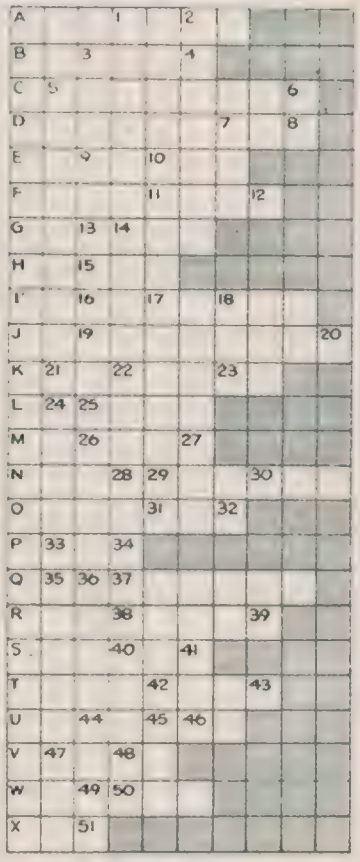
CLUE DOWN

A. Naval action of December, 1939 (3, 6, 2, 3, 5, 5).

CLUES ACROSS

A. Cyclone of the China Sea.
B. Seat fixed on an elephant's back.
C. To listen to secrets.
D. Written account of someone's life.
E. Small Mediterranean fish used for sauce.
F. Court of Justice.
G. Boredom.
H. Defamation in writing.
I. Small white Alpine plant.
J. Foreign or bizarre.
K. Happiness.
L. Explanation or system of anything.
M. Agricultural implement for breaking up clods.
N. Something done to test a theory.
O. Dish of rice cooked with onions and cheese.
P. Teasing desire.
Q. Green coating which forms on brass, copper or bronze.
R. And the rest (2, 6).
S. Directions for forms of service in prayer books.
T. Over-abundance, repletion.
U. Maker of metal parts of harness.
V. Wall tapestry.
W. Approaching.
X. Cambridgeshire cathedral city.





BRAIN TEASER by Fred Borders

A speedboat powered with rocket motors was being tested on a circular course. On its first circuit, a fault developed in one of the rockets with the result that the average speed around that circuit worked out at 20 m.p.h.

Just as the boat approached the end of the circuit the fault was located and the speed of the boat was increased so greatly that the second circuit was accomplished at 60 m.p.h.

What was the average speed of the boat over the two circuits?

NOW TURN TO PAGE 36 FOR THE ANSWERS

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Cat among the pigeons

continued from previous page

will be just as I say. Nothing will happen."

Jennifer looked disappointed.

It was some six weeks later that a young man tapped discreetly on the door of a room in Bloomsbury.

It was a small room. Behind a desk sat a fat, middle-aged man slumped in a chair; he was wearing a crumpled suit, which was smothered in cigar ash.

"Well?" said the fat man with half-closed eyes. "What is it now?" It was said of Colonel Pikeaway that his eyes were always just closing in sleep, or just opening after sleep.

"Edmundson, from the F.O., sir."

Colonel Pikeaway blinked, appeared to be going to sleep again and muttered: "Third secretary at our embassy in Rafat at the time of the revolution. Right? I suppose I'd better see him."

Mr. Edmundson was a tall, fair young man, very correctly dressed.

Colonel Pikeaway's eyes began to close again. But before they did so, he spoke:

"You were in Rafat at the time of the revolution? A nasty business. You were a friend of Bob Rawlinson's, weren't you?"

"I know him fairly well, yes."

"Wrong tense," said Colonel Pikeaway. "He's dead."

"Yes, sir, I know. But I wasn't sure—"

COLONEL PIKEAWAY said: "You don't have to take pains to be discreet here. Rawlinson flew Ali Yusuf out of Rafat on the day of the revolution. Plane wasn't heard of again. Wreckage of a plane has been found in the Arolez mountains. Two bodies. News will be released tomorrow. Right?"

Edmundson admitted that it was quite right.

"We know all about things here," said Colonel Pikeaway." "That's what we're for. Some reason to believe it was sabotage. Delayed-action bomb. The plane crashed in a pretty inaccessible place. There was a reward offered for finding it, but these things take a long time to filter through. Then we had to fly out experts to make an examination. We've been asked to make certain—inquiries. By interested parties. Parties, that is, to whom Her Majesty's Government is ' well disposed." He looked hard at Edmundson. "Know what I mean?"

"Well, I have heard something." Edmundson spoke reluctantly.

"You've heard perhaps, that nothing of value was found on the bodies, or amongst the wreckage. You haven't heard that perhaps something of value *ought* to have been found? Did Bob Rawlinson say anything to you before he flew out of Rafat? He was in Ali's confidence, if anyone was."

"I think there was something." Edmundson spoke cautiously. "Something important that Bob might have wanted to tell me."

"Ah," said Colonel Pikeaway. "Interesting. Let's have what you know."

"It's very little, sir. Bob rang me up the day the whole show started. He told me—we had a simple code of our own—that something was up. He asked me to meet him at our usual rendezvous—outside one of the banks, but rioting broke out in that particular quarter and the police closed the road. I couldn't make contact with Bob. He flew Ali out that same afternoon."

"I see," said Pikeaway. "No idea where he was telephoning from?"

"No. It might have been anywhere."

"Pity." He paused and then threw out casually: "Do you know Mrs. Sutcliffe?"

"You mean Bob Rawlinson's sister? I met her out there, of course. I don't know her well."

"Were she and Bob very close?"

Edmundson considered.

"No, I shouldn't say so. She was a good deal older than he was."

"So you don't think it likely that Bob Rawlinson would have confided an important secret to her?"

"It's difficult to say—but no, I shouldn't think so."

"I shouldn't either," said Colonel Pikeaway. He sighed. "Well, there we are, Mrs. Sutcliffe and her daughter are on their way home by the long sea route. They dock at Tilbury on the Eastern Queen tomorrow."

He was silent for a moment or two, whilst his eyes made a thoughtful survey of the young man opposite him. Then he held out his hand.

John Edmundson went out. The discreet young man came back.

"Thought I might send him to Tilbury to break the news to the sister," said Pikeaway. "Friend of her brother's—all that. But I decided against it. Inelastic type. That's the F.O. training. I'll find someone else for that job. But first send me along Ronnie. I've got an assignment for him."

Colonel Pikeaway was apparently just going off to sleep again when the young man called Ronnie entered. He was tall, dark, muscular, and had a gay and rather impertinent manner.

"How'd you like to penetrate into a girls' school?" Colonel Pikeaway asked.

"A girls' school?" Ronnie lifted his eyebrows. "That will be something new. What are they up to? Making bombs in the chemistry class?"

"Nothing of that kind. Very superior high-class school. Meadowbank."

"Meadowbank!"

"Princess Shaista, first cousin and only near relative of the late Prince Ali Yusuf of Rafat, goes there next term. She's been at school in Switzerland up to now."

"What do I do? Abduct her?"

PIKEAWAY said: "Certainly not. She may become a focus of interest in the near future. I want you to keep an eye on developments. I'll have to leave it vague. I don't know what or who may turn up, but if any of our more unlikeable friends seem to be interested, report it."

The young man nodded. "And how do I get in to watch?"

"I think I'll have to make you a gardener."

"Is there a job going for a gardener?"

"Sure to be," said Colonel Pikeaway. "Every garden in England is short-staffed. I'll write you some nice testimonials. No time to waste—summer term begins on the twenty-ninth." He

NEIGHBOURS—4

We make our friends; we make our enemies; but God makes our next-door neighbour.

G. K. Chesterton

Answers to Everybody's Puzzling
See page 35

FRED BORDERS'S BRAIN TEASER

The average will *not* be ½ (20 + 60), i.e. 40 m.p.h., because the boat has not run for the same time at each speed! The correct way to calculate the true average, is to average the times taken per mile. At 20 m.p.h. the time is 3 minutes, and at 60 m.p.h. it is 1 minute. Hence the average time per mile is 2 minutes, and the average speed is 30 m.p.h.

QUIZZLE

Quotation: How happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away! (John Gay)

Clue Down: The Battle of the River Plate. Clues Across: (A) Typhoon; (B) Howdah; (C) Eavesdrop; (D) Biography; (E) Anchovy; (F) Tribunal; (G) Tedium; (H) Libel; (I) Edelweiss; (J) Outlandish; (K) Felicity; (L) Theory; (M) Harrow; (N) Experiment; (O) Risotto; (P) Itch; (Q) Verdigris; (R) Etcetera; (S) Rubric; (T) Plethora; (U) Lorimer; (V) Arras; (W) Toward; (X) Ely.

"Twelve o'clock and the beds still not made!"

drew a sheet of paper towards him. "What do you fancy as a name?"

"Adam would seem appropriate."

"Let's say 'Adam Goodman.' Go and work out your past history with Jenson and then get cracking." He looked at his watch as a buzzer went on the desk. "There he is now. Always punctual, Mr. Robinson."

The man who came into the room as Adam left it was not definitely of any racial origin, but what did seem highly unlikely was that he was an Englishman called Robinson. He was fat and well dressed, with a yellow face and melancholy dark eyes.

As his guest accepted a cigar, Colonel Pikeaway said: "It is very good of you to offer to help us. I gather you've heard the plane has been found?"

"Wednesday of last week," said Mr. Robinson. "Young Rawlinson was the pilot. A tricky flight. But the crash wasn't due to any error on Rawlinson's part. The plane had been tampered with—by a certain Achmed, a senior mechanic. Completely trustworthy—or so Rawlinson thought. He's got a good job with the new régime now."

"So it was sabotage?"

"Yes. Ali Yusuf was ill-equipped to cope with treachery. But we do not concern ourselves with dead kings. Only with what they leave behind."

"Which is?"

Mr. Robinson shrugged. "A substantial bank balance in Geneva; a modest balance in London; considerable assets in his own country, now taken over by the glorious new régime. And, finally, a small personal item."

"Small?"

"Small in bulk. Handy to carry upon the person."

"They weren't on Ali Yusuf's person."

"No. Because he had handed them over to young Rawlinson."

"They weren't on young Rawlinson's person, either."

"In that case," said Mr. Robinson, "it seems they must have been got out of the country by some other means."

"What other means? Any idea?"

"Rawlinson went to a café in the town after he had received the jewels. He was not seen to speak to anyone or approach anyone whilst he was there. Then he went to the Ritz Savoy Hotel where his sister was staying. He went up to her room and was there for about twenty minutes. She herself was out. He then left the hotel and went to the Merchants' Bank in Victory Square where he cashed a cheque. When he came out of the bank, a riot was beginning. It was some time before the square was cleared. Rawlinson then went straight to the airfield where, in company with Sergeant Achmed, he went over the plane.

"Ali Yusuf drove out to see the new road construction, stopped his car at the airfield, joined Rawlinson and expressed a desire to take a short flight and see the dam and the new highway construction from the air. They took off and did not return."

"And your deductions from that?"

"My dear fellow, the same as yours. Why did Bob Rawlinson spend twenty minutes in his sister's room when she was out and he had been told that she was not likely to return until evening? He left her a note which would have taken him at most three minutes to scribble. What *else* did he do?"

"You are suggesting that he concealed the jewels amongst his sister's belongings?"

"It seems indicated, does it not? Mrs. Sutcliffe was evacuated that same day with other British subjects. She was flown to Aden with her daughter. She arrives at Tilbury tomorrow."

Pikeaway nodded.

"Look after her," said Mr. Robinson. "If she has the jewels, she will be in danger." He closed his eyes. "I so much dislike violence."

"You think violence is likely?"

"There are people interested. Various undesirable people."

Colonel Pikeaway asked delicately: "Have you yourself any—er—special interest in the matter?"

"I represent a certain group of interests," said Mr. Robinson. "Some of the stones in question were supplied by my syndicate to his late Highness—at a very fair and reasonable price. The group of people I represent who are interested in the recovery of the stones would, I may venture to say, have had the approval of the late owner. I shouldn't like to say more. These matters are so delicate."

"But you are definitely on the side of the angels," Pikeaway smiled.

"Ah—angels! Angels—yes." Mr. Robinson paused. "Do you happen to know who occupied the rooms in the Savoy Hotel on either side of the room occupied by Mrs. Sutcliffe?"

COLONEL PIKEAWAY looked vague. "Let me see, now—I believe I do. On the left-hand side there was Señora Angelica de Toredo—a Spanish—er—dancer appearing at the local cabaret. Perhaps not strictly Spanish and perhaps not a very good dancer—but popular with the clientele. On the other side was one of a group of schoolteachers, I understand——"

Mr. Robinson beamed approvingly.

"You are always the same. I come to tell you things, but nearly always you know them already."

"No. No." Colonel Pikeaway made a polite disclaimer.

"Between us," said Mr. Robinson, "we know a good deal."

Their eyes met. "I hope," Mr. Robinson said, rising, "that we know enough."

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NEXT WEEK: Murder comes suddenly to Meadowbank

"Cat Among The Pigeons" is to be published as a novel by Collins early in November. Price 12s. 6d.

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We advise . . .

A LARGE sycamore tree grows in the garden between our semi-detached house and the next. The tree is near our house and the roots have now reached the foundations. The house next door is rented. If damage is done to our house, who is liable—the tenant or the landlord?—E. A. C., Urmston, Manchester.

● Your remedy against the owner of the tree—the landlord—would be to apply to court for an injunction to compel him to render it safe and pay for any damage you have suffered.

He should be made aware of the danger and given a chance of remedying it before action is taken.

EMBARRASSING FORMALITY

I WANT to send a small gift parcel to the United States and find it rather embarrassing to state the exact price paid for the gift. Would it be sufficient to put "under ten dollars"? — Mrs. M. E., Warrington, Lancs.

● The United States Customs Authorities insist upon the actual value of a gift parcel being declared on the label. It is not permissible just to say under ten dollars.

ENTRENCHED SHELTER

WHEN we moved into this house we were told that the council would not remove the air raid shelter which had been built by a previous owner. It is built of thick, reinforced concrete and has filled up with stagnant water. Can we have it removed on insanitary grounds by the council?—Mrs. R. F., Welling, Kent.

● You cannot compel the council to remove the shelter if it was privately built. They may be prepared to do it if you pay for the work.

BIGGER BARN DOOR

I WIDENED the door of a stone barn so that it could admit my car. Now I wonder if I should have submitted plans for this to the local council and whether they have powers to make me undo the work—W. R., Okehampton, Devon.

● It appears unlikely that the council would have required you to submit plans for their approval before you could widen the barn door, but it is at their discretion.

They may, however, assess the building as a garage and this might increase the rates accordingly. Unless they have already served you with a notice that you have infringed building regulations there is nothing you need do.

A CASE OF MALICE

A FRIEND of mine got into financial difficulties. Throughout his troubles his wife remained in ignorance of his affairs. His relations now admit that they blamed the wife and talked about her behind her back. Is this a case of libel or not?—Lt.-Col. R. L., Cornwall.

● To be libellous, a defamatory statement must be published in permanent form, such as writing. In such cases damage to the plaintiff is presumed and damages may be recovered at law.

If the statement were by word of mouth only, it is slander and the plaintiff must, generally speaking, show that he has suffered actual loss through it.

WORMS NOT TO BLAME

I AM having trouble with my furniture. It may be caused by woodworm, but I don't find sawdust deposits. Instead I have seen what looks like ink. When I cleaned this away it left a slit which went through the drawer. The furniture is mahogany, not veneered.—Mrs. S. T., Elland, Yorks.

● The crack you have noticed is probably a fault in the wood and the substance which comes out of it may be either a form of sap, a very minor local decay which will not affect the rest of that piece, or else some substance put in to cover what might otherwise have been an unsightly blemish.

THE FAMILY TARTAN

FRIENDS in New Zealand have asked me to let them have a sample of the Scottish tartan which applies to the name Sturrock. Can you tell me how to go about it?—Miss C. G., Angus.

● There is a Sturrock family tartan, but it can be obtained only by having a length woven to order. The Scotch House, 2 Brompton Road, London, S.W.1, will accept an order.

CLAIM DELAYED

LAST year during the course of my employment with a civil engineering firm I sustained a broken foot in a fall of stone. I returned to work after a fortnight with the foot in plaster. I received nothing in compensation, except for the assurance that my job was safe. Now I have been paid off as redundant. Can I still claim anything from them, even if it were just the two weeks' pay I lost. My foot still causes me discomfort when wearing shoes.—G. W. T., Choppington, Northumberland.

● If there is evidence to show that the accident was caused through the negligence of your employer or any of his employees, you would have a claim for damages for all loss you have suffered as a result.

Without such evidence it would be impossible to succeed in any claim.

ANTI-DAMP EXPENSES

CAN you advise me on the respective merits and difference in price of having a blue brick damp proof course installed in my bungalow, or one made of felting laid on ordinary bricks, with a layer of mortar?—R. J., Cinderhill, Nottingham.

● The actual damp course is independent of the type of brickwork used. While slate is generally the best possible material for a damp course, felting is perfectly adequate.

It is preferable to blue bricks, as it is easier to install and cheaper.

Other possible materials for the damp course are lead or copper sheets or bituminous-covered lead slate or a bituminous composition.

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS keeps practical homelovers up to date

▸ **New glass fibre sink:** Exciting new colours, red, green, and cream, are a feature of the new polyester glass fibre sink top by Marley. Available in two sizes, the single drainer which may be left- or right-handed, measures 42 in. by 21 in.

The double drainer measures 63 in. by 21 in. Complete with built-in over-flow, the Marleyware sinks cost £11 and £13 15s. respectively. By the Marley Tile Co., Ltd., Sevenoaks, Kent.

▸ **Non-tangle wash:** Do you find yourself having to untangle clothes after they have been in the washing machine?

Then avoid this by turning all garments with long sleeves or ties outside in. Safety-pins should be removed and pockets emptied.

▸ **Whistles when it boils:** A compact new electric water heater, which may be mounted on the wall or window sill above the sink, by the home handyman, has been brought on to the market by Creda. Designed to heat to a selected temperature or to boil, any quantity of water from a cupful to a gallon, the heat-resistant glass flask container is measured off in pints for quick and easy calculation.

Complete with adjustable inlet hose which connects up with the water tap and mounting brackets and screws for fixing to wall, the Creda Corvette will run off a 13 or 15 amp. 3-pin socket outlet. A pilot light works in conjunction with the thermostat, and a whistle blows when the water boils. In red or turquoise with touches of chrome and white, the price is £10 7s. plus £1 17s. 10d. tax. Manufactured by Simplex Electric Co., Ltd., Creda Works, Blythe Bridge, Staffordshire.

▸ **Face-lift for bathrooms:** Bring some eye appeal to your bathroom by introducing some matching curtains and towels. Osman towelling comes in an attractive range of patterns and colours, and can be made up into easily washed towels and curtains.

▸ **Ironing loose covers:** Do you have difficulty ironing some of the corners of your loose covers? The solution is to replace the covers and iron on the chairs.

You can eat fat and keep fit

continued from page 15

that even when the calorie intake was raised to the high level of 2,600 a day, weight-loss still occurred provided that mainly fat and protein were eaten.

Nevertheless, in spite of the virtues of fat for slimming, and in spite of the evidence of Stefansson, Anderson, Donaldson, Pennington and the du Pont diet, the phantom danger of fatty diets prevailed in many minds.

In 1955 the anti-fat school came out with a modified doctrine based on the findings of Dr. Bronte Stewart, who declared that the level of cholesterol in the blood could be lowered by giving people a high proportion of unsaturated fats (vegetable fats and fish oils which remain fluid at room temperature).

As a consequence, it is often heard that saturated fats (those that set when left to cool) are worse for the heart than unsaturated fats.

Preparations of unsaturated fats such as corn oil are available in chemist shops everywhere for heart patients.

But a survey of countries with different tastes in edible fats and oils shows no evidence that eating mainly unsaturated fats protects against heart disease, or that eating saturated fats encourages it. Norwegians eat a lot of saturated fat in the form of margarine but have less fatal coronary thrombosis than New Zealanders, who eat little.

And if the Norwegians are protected by the fish they eat, then it is strange that Aberdeen, where fish consumption is also high, has twice the coronary death-rate of Oslo.

Indeed, in the past year Bronte Stewart has published two medical papers in which he shows the weakest of links between coronary thrombosis and either the amount or the kind of fat you eat.

It is hard to imagine how such links could ever have been credited. After all, fat is the reserve material of nature. It was man's staple food from the dawn of history to the time six thousand years ago when cereals were introduced.

"I will give you the good of the land of Egypt," Pharaoh told Joseph, according to the book of Genesis, "and ye shall eat the fat of the land."

The phrase epitomizes the best in food, and long experience has taught people all over the world to regard fat as a food for health.

The myth exposed

Recently the case against fat has been even more strikingly refuted by Dr. John Yudkin, Professor of Nutrition at London University, who has related diet to deaths from coronary thrombosis in different countries and social classes. By means of careful statistical research, including a study of trends in mortality in Britain during the last thirty years or so, he gave the following answers to six blunt questions about fat and heart disease.

1. As fat intake rises does the number of deaths caused by coronary thrombosis rise? No.

2. Is there a relationship between the proportion of calories obtained from fat and the incidence of coronary thrombosis? No.

3. Is the intake of animal fat related to coronary thrombosis? No.

4. Is there a relationship with butter, cheese and milk-fat consumption? No simple relationship (there is a slight association between coronary thrombosis and high living standards).

5. With vegetable fats? No.

6. Hydrogenated or saturated fats—margarine, shortening, etc.? No.

The myth is clearly exposed. As research goes on, the true reason for the extraordinary rise in the number of deaths from coronary thrombosis will emerge. When it does a major preventive medicine programme will be needed.

Meanwhile, my own policy is to concentrate on keeping a normal weight, busy, physically active, happy and relaxed. And to eat all the fat I can. I tell my patients to do the same.

THE END

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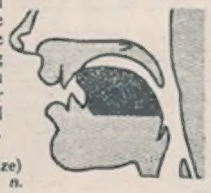

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